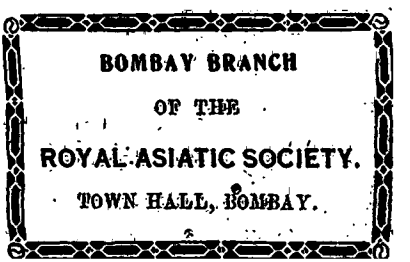

00141074



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016

OF

CHARLES MORDAUNT

EARL OF PETERBOROUGH

AND

MONMOUTH:

WITH

SELECTIONS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MICHELAGA," AND "THE CONQUEST OF CANADA."

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful is man,
How passing wonder He who made him such!"

YOUNG'S *Night Thoughts*.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

14.074

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1853.

WWA. c. 8

9: .S42
pet Mem.
141074



LIFE

OF

THE EARL OF PETERBOROUGH.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM the time that the news of the loss of Barcelona reached Madrid, to retake it became the cherished object of the Court. Philip of Anjou threw aside his weakness and irresolution under the pressure of danger, and prepared himself to head a Catalonian invasion. He wrote earnestly to Louis XIV. for assistance, but at the same time did not neglect to make vigorous exertions himself. His grandfather promptly replied by a promise of assistance, although France was at that time herself in extreme difficulty. The genius of Marlborough had already turned the

tide of success against her on the northern frontiers, and the maritime superiority of England and Holland could no longer be disputed. Nevertheless, from the frontiers of Portugal, from Italy, Provence, nay, even from Flanders and the Rhine, formidable French armies were assembled at Saragoza and Roussillon. At the same time a fleet of twelve ships of the line, under the Count of Thoulouse, a natural son of Louis XIV., sailed to blockade Barcelona, while the able Duke of Berwick was sent to lead the diminished forces of the southern army.

The command of the French army of Catalonia, under Philip himself, was given to Marshal Tessé, although he had already displayed his incapacity in the same neighbourhood. He had reached Saragoza in January, and soon excited the sullen disaffection of the Arragonese into a storm of hatred. French regiments were opposed to the death in entering the towns, French officers were murdered in their beds, and the savage reprisals adopted by the Marshal, far from subduing, only aroused the spirit of the Spaniards. But though

cruel to the weak he was timid before the strong; he objected to the zealous activity of Philip, and thwarted his plans. He exaggerated the strength of the allies and undervalued his own. He would neither act himself, nor accept the suggestions of others. As he advanced his difficulties increased. When he had passed Lerida, the somaten, or alarm bell, summoned the warlike Catalan peasantry from all the neighbourhood to oppose his march. These undisciplined swarms could of course offer no continued resistance to the veterans of France, but they harassed the powerful force which they dared not attack. Every pass, where the ground offered an advantage, was obstinately disputed, and seldom carried without heavy loss. Even the desperate sacrifice of laying waste their own country was not spared; all cattle were driven away, the corn removed, and the wells and springs were poisoned.

Numbers and discipline, however, at length prevailed over the enthusiastic but unorganised peasantry. On the 2d of April Tessé arrived before Barcelona, and there was joined by the

troops from Roussillon under the Duke de Noailles, who had come by the way of Genoa. The town was then invested by land. At the same time the French fleet, under the Count of Thoulouse, now increased to thirty ships, blockaded the port. The besiegers encamped upon the north side of the town, with their right wing resting upon the hill under Montjuich.

When King Charles could no longer doubt that the object of Tessé was to retake Barcelona, he endeavoured to repair his error in having left the town almost defenceless. He hastily recalled whatever troops and guns were within reach, and urged on the repairs of the fortifications which had been completely neglected since his entrance into the place: those of Montjuich especially, where the breaches were still open. The garrison was at this time so much distressed for money, which was delayed in coming from Italy, that the soldiers only received 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, and the officers, in their extremity, were obliged to pawn part of their uniforms.

But in this hour of need the spirit and deter-

mination of the King made some amends for his former perversity. His example of zeal and activity inspired the inhabitants and the garrison. He appealed with success to the religious enthusiasm of the Catalans, and even called in the aid of pretended miracles to his cause. All the citizens took arms, the monks joined the ranks, and Capuchin friars were seen in the dress of their order, carrying the musket, with their long beards tied with ribands of Austrian colours. Even women and children formed themselves into companies and laboured at the fortifications.

As soon as Peterborough became aware that Barcelona was the object for which the French were concentrating their power, he immediately wrote to the King to propose a plan of action, which, had it been adopted, would, probably, have decided the fate of Spain. He suggested that Charles should forthwith go by sea to Portugal, put himself at the head of the allied army, which was 25,000 strong, and march straight upon Madrid. No more than 5000 men could be assembled to oppose him. He added that the utmost secresy

was necessary, and that it could hardly fail of success. "I would undertake to maintain Catalonia and Valencia, and, perhaps, to open the way to Madrid." But now, as before, this bold but really safe course was rejected by the German councillors, and Charles resolved to take his chance once more among his faithful Catalans. When Peterborough received Charles's answer, he unhesitatingly broke up from his agreeable quarters at Valencia. After having provided, as sparingly as he dared, for the safety of his late conquests, he marched northwards with all the force he could collect. Despite all his exertions, he could not raise his little army above 2000 foot and 600 horse; but with this handful of men, he confidently undertook to grapple with a marshal of France and 20,000 men.

His main hope was from England. After his capture of Barcelona, he had earnestly entreated Queen Anne, through Brigadier Stanhope, to send supplies to his army. The news of his success was received with great satisfaction in England: a considerable sum of money was voted

by Parliament for the service of his army; and the London Gazette, of the 24th of June, "did his lordship the honour to put him at the head of an army of 25,000. But however his lordship, contrary to his usual good fortune, happened to be magnified in this particular, all the forces his lordship could muster up in Valencia * * * were somewhat above 4000, and wanted of the 25,000 little more than the odd 20."

When Peterborough had, by forced marches, reached the neighbourhood of Barcelona, he took up a strong position in the mountains, about two leagues from the town. His arrival was the signal for constant alarms in the enemy's camp. He changed his position repeatedly, and baffled all Torres' activity in trying to catch him. A crowd of Miquelets, under the Conde de Cifuentes, proved highly useful allies; they brought intelligence, they harassed and cut off small parties of the enemy.

At daylight, on the 3rd of April, Philip and Tessé planted the Bourbon standard on the north side of Montjuich, within musket shot of the

walls of that fort. About nine in the forenoon, a body of French infantry, supported by two squadrons of horse, made an attempt to carry the western outworks by storm. This was the weakest part of the citadel, and it was at that time only manned by 100 men of Hamilton's regiment. These gallant Englishmen had only arrived the night before, from a forced march of seventy miles, which they had performed on mules in two days. But though wearied they were not dispirited. The French were received with so determined an aspect, and so sharp a fire, that they hesitated, halted, broke, and fled. As they went off, the British threw up their caps and raised loud shouts, which so exasperated the enemy that, in spite of their first bloody repulse, they reformed, and again and again returned to the charge, but each time with the same result as before. This defeat was the more galling, as they had expected to find there only the usual Spanish guard of forty men, and to have had an easy victory.

When this unexpected firing was heard in the

city, the whole garrison instantly turned out, and marched to support Montjuich: only twelve men were left to guard the person of the King, that every available bayonet might be brought to bear upon this threatened point. That day, however, the enemy made no further attempt: the Miquelets were much encouraged by the success, and they "became so familiarly bold as to advance within the works and pickeer upon the French, as if they were shooting at woodcocks."

Although repulsed in their first enterprize, the French continued actively to complete their investment, and when the sun rose on the 4th of April, a sight presented itself to Charles, which might well shake his confidence: from the north-west side of Montjuich, for nearly fifteen miles, with slight intervals, his rival's camp extended over the undulating plain, and almost surrounded Barcelona. During that day nothing of importance was attempted by either party. The light troops on both sides, however, joined in constant quarrel. Some active Miquelets gained a useful supply for the town by seizing

700 of the enemy's sheep and 12 of their mules, and carrying them off in safety, within sight of their camp, to Conventa Gracia. On the 5th, Charles found that he had sustained a serious loss in the Fuerte Redonda, which had been surrendered by treachery during the night. This fort stood on the strand, somewhat to the west of Montjuich, and commanded all the seashore on that side. The enemy immediately profited by this advantage, and commenced landing their provisions, guns, and ammunition.

On the other hand, Brigadiers General Lord Donegal and Sentiman, with two English and two newly raised Catalan battalions, managed to elude the vigilance of the besiegers, and enter the town. When the enemy were informed of this they closed in their left wing to the eastward, in the hope of guarding against the introduction of further reinforcements. But these precautions were vain against the indefatigable Peterborough. He had received notice that the remainder of the garrison of Gerona, who had evacuated that town on the approach of the

Duc de Noailles, had embarked in a number of small boats, and were about to attempt a landing near Barcelona, on the north side. He started, as usual, by night, from his mountain camp, and, after a march of nearly twenty miles, arrived at the place of expected debarkation to such a nicety of time, that he received the Gerona men on their landing, and escorted them past the enemy's outposts to the town without discovery. He then regained his former position without the loss of a man. This seasonable assistance raised the strength of the besieged to upwards of 3000 men.

At the same time an alarming treason was discovered at the citadel of Montjuich; one of the garrison had hired a boy (who afterwards confessed the fact) to put out all the gun matches, and throw the priming powder out of the match-locks on the night of the 6th. If he could not succeed in thus disabling all the firearms, he was to pay especial attention to those on the weakest face of the works, where the attack was most likely to be renewed. This conspiracy, together

with the doubtful case of Fuerte Redonda, which had been also under his charge, led to such strong suspicions against the Spanish governor of Montjuich, that he was superseded, and the gallant Earl of Donegal appointed to the command instead.

On the 7th the besiegers pushed on two entrenchments beyond the Convent of Santa Matrona, and occupied them in some force. During the day they were molested by an irregular but stinging fire, and at dusk they were for a short time driven out by a sudden rush of the Miquelets with the loss of their colours: after a time, however, they in turn beat back the sally, and retook their works.

Tessé opened his batteries of mortars on the 8th upon Montjuich within musket shot. Donegal determined to resist this lodgment. In the afternoon he collected a number of Miquelets, and supporting them with 200 English, drove the enemy from their works; they fell back however upon some houses and loopholed ruins, there holding their ground till an overwhelming force

came to their relief. They then advanced and retook their batteries. The three following days and nights the firing was continued on both sides, the enemy progressing but slowly against a gallant defence. The British resorted to the plan of sending showers of stones from their mortars upon the men working in the trenches, which they found more effective than iron shot and shells, especially in the dark.

On the 12th, 13th, and 14th, four new batteries were thrown up by the French, and every face of the citadel was under fire. The besieged could hardly stand to their guns under this superiority of metal, and their loss was severe. The Miquelets, too, now partly withdrew from the dangerous strife; but they were not idle, they only sought a more congenial service. By night they crept into the French camp, murdered and stripped officers in their tents, carried off horses, and slew solitary sentries, invariably either escaping undiscovered or eluding pursuit. In spite of the vigilance of the French fleet, on the 14th, a barque got safely into Mataro, a small port a

few miles to the north-east of Barcelona, bearing letters of importance to the King from England by the way of Genoa, but no material aid.

At eight the following evening the besiegers made a furious attack on the western outwork of Montjuich, having ascertained that it was only defended by a part of a newly raised Spanish regiment: they carried all before them for a moment, the Spaniards flying at the first onset. But on the inner ramparts they were met by Donegal and his grenadiers: there an obstinate contest was carried on for two hours, the stubborn Englishmen not yielding a foot of ground. In the heat of the strife the defenders repeatedly threw back the enemy's grenades with their hands before they had time to explode, the general himself showing the perilous example. In spite of the bravest efforts, however, the French retained possession of the outwork which the Spaniards had abandoned to them, and subsequently formed entrenchments and a battery upon it.

Lord Donegal still held out gallantly: his little force was much reduced in numbers, and so

worn out by constant exertion, that men frequently fell asleep while under arms, in the heat of the fire. The besiegers now partly directed their attention towards the city: several bomb-ketches moved in as close as they could venture, and threw shells, while some of the batteries poured red-hot shot into the town. This spread a general alarm: the people could hardly be induced to continue working on the defences, and many removed themselves with their most precious goods into the shelter of the churches. Ammunition and even confidence began to fail, when, at two in the morning of the 21st, a half galley ran safely into the harbour, bearing a supply of powder and encouraging messages from Lord Peterborough. Three days afterwards he realised a share of the hopes he had then excited, by throwing some Neapolitans into the town. He embarked a body of these men in small boats at Mataro, and sent them along the shore to pass the enemy's fleet if possible unobserved. They found, however, that a line of boats had been drawn across the harbour to

blockade the entrance. Nothing daunted they attacked the boats, and after a sharp action with small arms for more than an hour, 400 men succeeded in forcing their way through, and the rest returned to Mataro in safety.

Meanwhile Peterborough formed the daring design of a general attack with his handful of men upon the French army. Such temerity would have been madness without the assistance of the besieged, and by this time the enemy's lines were so close about the city, that the communication necessary to persuade Charles to join in a combined attack, and to arrange its plan, was highly difficult. Peterborough dispatched an aide-de-camp with this object, who succeeded in getting into the town, and obtaining promise of support from the King, arranging the attack for the 22nd. The messenger, however, with his papers, fell into Tessé's hands on his return, and being thus warned, the whole of the besieging army was held in readiness on that day. At the hour appointed Peterborough marshalled his force on the hills for the attack, and the besieged were

all in arms on the ramparts; but seeing that the enemy was fully prepared, the rash project was abandoned, and the troops returned to their quarters.

At length Montjuich was lost. The enemy had prepared a large force for the attack, in profound secrecy, close at hand, and the firing of a salvo of four mortars was to be the signal to advance. About midday on the 22nd the signal was given; the French rushed on with loud shouts, and succeeded in a complete surprise. Many of the English officers were absent, and the few who were on the spot had hardly time to get their men under arms, before Velasco's and the western bastion were lost. The defenders then fell back upon the castle or keep, and there held their ground. Meanwhile the English officers came running to their posts at the noise of the firing, and seeing some foreign troops drawn up in the works, joined them, concluding they were Dutch.* They were all immediately taken prisoners. The men who had defended the castle, not aware of what had become of their

officers, were at a loss for orders, and soon fell into such confusion that, had the enemy then pushed his advantage, he might probably have met with little opposition.

The next morning a feeble effort was made by the people of Barcelona, headed by priests, and bearing with them the sacred banner of the church, to relieve the castle of Montjuich; it was, however, easily repelled. The little garrison sallied out to assist the movement; but on the retreat of the relief, they had to fight their way back with great difficulty, and the brave Lord Donegal with several of his officers was killed. The remnant of the British troops then abandoned the position they had so resolutely defended, making their way safely to the city, and the French took possession of it.

This important success encouraged Tessé to proceed with vigour. He pushed batteries of heavy guns close to the walls, which soon destroyed the labours of the garrison. So close were they, that neither gun nor musket could be brought to bear against them. He designed to make three prac-

ticable breaches, the principal of which was to be close to Port Antonio, and to crush the outer walls; but the besieged in the mean time had erected inner defences, which would still have proved formidable even when the breach might have been carried. Tessé continued an extreme caution, and deferred the intended assault from day to day. A bolder leader than he might well have hesitated to deliver a doubtful attack in front, while such a man as Peterborough hung upon his rear: the delay proved of the last importance.

This state of things excited great alarm in Barcelona, and Charles repeatedly sent urgent entreaties to Peterborough to come to his relief at all hazards. But Peterborough had calculated the chances of the step; he had seen a similar attempt fail once before, and although none could exceed him in daring, few could, at the same time, equal him in prudence. He saw that the safety of the city, and perhaps the fate of the war depended upon his making head against and checking the besiegers, till the arrival of the

British fleet. For this he waited in the most anxious expectation.

Early in March Admiral Sir John Leake and Baron Wassenaer had put out from Lisbon, with the combined fleet, under orders from Lord Peterborough to make for the coast of Valencia. For a considerable time they were delayed by strong contrary winds, and did not reach the Straits until the middle of April. There they were joined by Captain Price with a small squadron, in which two English regiments were embarked. Even with this reinforcement the admirals did not consider themselves strong enough to cope with the Count of Thoulouse before Barcelona, and much precious time was therefore wasted at Gibraltar. At length they sailed for Valencia on the 24th of April, sending on four fast-sailing frigates to gather intelligence of the enemy's force and dispositions, at Altea and other Mediterranean seaports. The fleet followed to Altea, where they learned that another squadron was on its way from Lisbon to join them. A council of war was then held, which decided with super-

abundant caution to await all the expected reinforcements before undertaking any movement against the enemy.

This untimely delay was vehemently opposed by Brigadier-General Stanhope, who commanded the troops, and who well knew every day's importance. That able officer held also the commission of Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Charles, but unfortunately while embarked he had no power to control the movements of the admirals. His character is thus described by his distinguished descendant Lord Mahon.

"In both departments of war and state affairs, he was considered by his contemporaries as well skilled; and they saw him at successive periods attain the highest pinnacle of each, being at one time Commander-in-Chief in Spain, and afterwards First Lord of the Treasury in England. In both he is admitted to have shown very great disinterestedness as to personal profit and enrichment. * * * Many men accordingly have left a more ample fortune, but few a more blameless character behind them. Even now his high qualities are recorded by tradition in the country where they were most conspicuously shown: his name

yet lives in the honourable recollection of the Spanish peasantry; and two of his great grandchildren, who fought (and one fell) in the late Peninsular campaigns, met with frequent inquiries, whether they were in any wise related to the Don Diego Estanop, the great English general in the War of the Succession."

The fleet remained at anchor in Altea Bay, but frigates were sent to the westward to seek for tidings of the expected succour, and a messenger was also directed to Vinaros, to communicate with Peterborough, and to obtain intelligence of his movements. On the 30th of April, Sir George Byng entered the harbour with the Irish squadron, which had come by way of Falmouth. Even then Sir John Leake persisted in awaiting Commodore's Walker's ships with a convoy of transports. On the 31st they also arrived, and the combined fleet at length weighed anchor. But now the obstruction of contrary winds succeeded to that of the over-prudent admiral. For three days they made no progress; and during those three days the position of the besieged king at Barcelona had become almost desperate.

Meanwhile, the messenger despatched by way of Vinaros had reached Lord Peterborough. By this communication Stanhope assured the Earl that every effort in his power should be made to hasten Sir John Leake's movements, and that he would give timely notice of the approach of the fleet; adding, that if a letter or paper should at any time be received, although it might be without direction, and be only a half-sheet "cut in the middle," the Earl might certainly depend upon it that the two fleets were joined, and were making the best of their way to Barcelona.

For the service of carrying this token, the messenger was richly bribed to fidelity, and encouraged by the assurance that there could be no danger, if he even fell into the enemy's hands, as his blank despatch could hardly be intelligent to the captors. Moreover, he was not entrusted with the secret, and was totally ignorant of the burthen of his message.

When this important blank sheet reached Peterborough, he instantly ordered his little army into motion. No one guessed the meaning

of the message, and no one could surmise the object of the march, which appeared to be its immediate result. But officers and soldiers obeyed as usual, without inquiry; "for" said one, who served under him there, "they were led to it by so many unaccountable varieties of success, that affiance became a second nature."

The little army followed Peterborough in full confidence; they marched the whole night, taking a south-westerly direction over the hills, towards the sea-shore. At daybreak they found themselves at the little seaport of Sitjes, about seven leagues from Barcelona, where they were ordered to encamp behind some hills. While they rested after their toilsome march, the indefatigable general busied himself in collecting every boat, barge, and fishing-smack, along the neighbouring coast, and secured them for immediate use; in two days he procured sufficient to embark his whole force. These strange preparations filled his officers with astonishment, and, despite their confidence in his prudence, with dismay. The impression among them was, that he had formed

the desperate determination to attack the French fleet by himself. Their uneasiness was, however, soon relieved.

He assembled his officers at night, when his preparations were complete, and informed them that he designed to meet and accompany the English fleet, which was now daily expected, before the French could have any notice of his design. That his efforts on land could be of no further benefit to the cause, and that, he having taken all the necessary steps for their transport in safety, nothing remained for them to do, but to obey his orders. This characteristic address alike satisfied the officers, and filled them with admiration of their commander's genius and of astonishment at his eccentricity.

At earliest dawn he repaired to the top of the highest hill, to look out for the anxiously expected fleet; but he strained his sight in vain, "to the unspeakable grief of his great and generous soul," for over the sea came still the roar of the artillery against the ruined walls of Barcelona, and fainter and fainter, day by day, the reply of

the besieged. When he descended to the shore, he found that a felucca had just arrived from the city, which had with great difficulty eluded the French blockade. She bore letters from the king, once more urging, with all the energy of desperation, the speedy coming of the fleet.

The arrival of the felucca gave Peterborough an opportunity to relieve his anxious impatience by action. To the surprise and dismay of his officers, and of Mr. Crow, the British minister, he immediately embarked in this open boat, and, attended only by one aide-de-camp, Captain Humphries, put out to sea in search of the fleet. He had, however, a sufficient object in view for this apparently rash step; he dreaded the escape of the French ships, should Sir John Leake display his overwhelming strength: he therefore intended to approach Barcelona with only such a force as might induce the Count of Thoulouse to hazard an engagement. Of the result, the gallant Englishman had no doubt. As has been before stated, Peterborough held the Queen's commission for full command over her fleets, as

well as armies, whenever he was embarked. This it was which induced him to put off at all hazards, and endeavour to join the ships in the night.

The impatient Earl urged the master of the little felucca much further out to sea than he wished: the weather was cold and stormy, and they were in a sorry plight before morning; but then, to their great joy, they sighted the Leopard man-of-war, commanded by Captain Price: from him they learned that the fleet was close at hand. This officer's surprise may be imagined at being boarded at break of day, almost out of sight of land, from an open boat, by the Admiral of all the fleets. Peterborough did not delay a moment after having received and given the necessary information; he turned the prow of his little vessel, and once more sought the shore.

He was met there by the joyful congratulations of those who hardly expected to have seen him safe again. He then gave orders to his disposable force, about 1400 men, to embark in the boats that night, and at daybreak to follow the movements of the fleet into the Bay of Barcelona.

But he again "felucca'd himself," and accompanied as before, only by Captain Humphries, put to sea to join Sir John Leake.

On the night of the 7th of May, Peterborough boarded the Prince George, and immediately hoisted the Union Jack on the main-top, taking upon himself the command of the fleet as Admiral. He then sent a pinnace to Sir John Leake, to acquaint him with his orders and intentions, and another boat to advise Brigadier-General Stanhope of his arrival. But the darkness delayed the delivery of these messages till nearly morning. When day appeared, the whole fleet was amazed at seeing the flag of the commander-in-chief. No one could account for the singular event; if the eccentric Earl had dropped from the clouds, they could hardly have thought it more extraordinary.

With a fair and fresh gale, the British fleet then crowded all sail; but when they had come within about eighteen miles of Barcelona, one of the French look-out ships gave the alarm; the

signal was passed on rapidly from one to the other, till it reached the Count of Thoulouse. He waited not to measure his enemy's strength; without a moment's delay he weighed anchor, raised the blockade, and put to sea. Thus was Peterborough deprived of the opportunity of a splendid, and perhaps decisive success. His sanguine but well founded expectation had pictured a glorious action at sea, within sight of the besieged city, and a triumphant entry into the harbour, bearing with him the captured squadrons of the enemy.

In the afternoon of the 8th, the leading ships of the British fleet entered the harbour of Barcelona, and preparations were made for an immediate landing. The first men who touched the shore were Peterborough's veterans, who had come with the fleet from Sitjes. Never was succour more welcome. An assault upon the trenches, which were now no longer defensible, was expected every hour. The king himself received the allied chiefs with the strongest

expressions of gratitude to them and to their royal mistress.

The French still for a few days pursued the siege with some show of vigour; but they had now a formidable force opposed to them, and the untiring energy of Peterborough. He worked day and night in superintending the works of defence, and in placing the troops in readiness for the expected assault. Even then there were some so timid as to despair of holding out; but the English general declared that he "would fight the French, even to the last corner of the city."

The soldiers of the besieging army were still eager for an assault; but Tessé, who had throughout opposed bold measures, was now obstinately resolved against so great a risk. Philip, and many of the Spanish officers, endeavoured to overcome his fears, but, a council of war being called, the general's views were adopted, and it was resolved to abandon the siege. At one o'clock on the morning of the 11th of May they

broke up their camp, under cover of the total darkness, and in great confusion made their way towards the French frontier. At daylight some of their guns began to fire, as they had left a small body of light troops to cover their retreat, and conceal it from the besieged as long as possible. This rearguard, however, soon followed. Tessé preferred even the ignominy of falling back into France, with his beaten and dispirited army, to the hazard of retracing his steps towards Saragoza, where his late devastations and cruelties had caused the whole population to rise in insurrection, as soon as the pressure of his army was removed. Besides which, he had received intelligence that Peterborough had caused every pass and every town by which he could have moved to the westward, to be fortified and garrisoned by the Miquelets.

Philip arrived at Roussillon, after a hasty and harassed retreat, sad and dejected, driven from the land which he had striven, not unworthily, to govern. His capital was lost, his friends, who had

stood by him bravely, abandoned to their fate, his enemies everywhere triumphant. Here he learned the disastrous news of Ramillies, and of the loss of nearly all the Netherlands; here he heard of the fatal battle of Turin, and of the loss of Italy. The day of his flight from Barcelona had been marked by a total eclipse. "The sun had been formerly chosen as the device of the House of Bourbon, and its dimness in the heavens at this critical period was generally thought to forbode the decline of that haughty family on earth."* In the light of a brighter intelligence how incredible appears the blasphemous meanness, of daring to connect the phases of a human family with the great walk of nature! The sun, sensitive to the fortunes of the royal house, which has done it the honour of adoption, hides its vassal face in respectful sympathy with the darkness which has fallen on the Bourbons!

All the ordnance and stores of the French army were abandoned to the victors; 200 heavy brass guns, 30 mortars, a vast quantity of shot,

* Lord Mahon.

shells, entrenching tools, 3000 barrels of powder, and other warlike stores, with 10,000 sacks of corn. So sudden was their flight, that they left everything uninjured, as if for the use of their friends instead of their enemies. But Tessé left, also, another legacy to Peterborough in all the sick and wounded of his army. They were very numerous, and their care was a serious inconvenience. They were, however, treated with the greatest generosity and indulgence by their chivalrous enemy. When committing them to the charge of the British general, Tessé addressed to him the following letter:—

"My Lord,

"You serve me, with circumstances more glorious for you, and more mortifying for me, as last year I did my Lord Galway in the siege of Badajos. You perceive the miserable necessity I am under of raising this siege, by the arrival of your fleet and the retreat of ours. My circumstances do not permit me to carry away a great many wounded, but humanity and your generosity make me hope that you will give orders for care to be taken of them. I desire you, my Lord, to be pleased to send them a guard, that they may not be

exposed to be ill-used by the common people and Miquelets. I take the liberty to send you by the trumpeter some money, which I desire you will order to have given to those who have the direction of the hospital, that they may take care of the sick; and a further sum will be remitted afterwards. The fortune of war makes your glory, and at this day my misfortune. I am beyond all expression, my Lord,

"Your most humble, most obedient servant,"

"De Tessé, Mareschal."

"P.S. — My Lord, I leave a commissary and a chirurgeon to look after the people I leave behind, and I desire you once more that they may be taken care of."

King Charles expressed his gratitude to Peterborough in the strongest terms for this great success, which he said "is chiefly owing to your courage, conduct, and vigilance." He raised the two Dutch generals, the Counts de Noyelles and Uhlefeldt (the latter of whom had commanded in the city), to the rank of Field-Marshal, and ordered medals to be struck to commemorate the occasion, "one of which, set round with diamonds, he presented to Sir John Leake; his next orders

were for re-casting all the damaged brass cannon which the enemy had left; upon every one of which was engraved, by order, a sun eclipsed, with this motto under it, 'magna parvis obscurantur.'"

CHAP. XIII.

It was generally thought throughout Europe, and especially in France, that the taking of Barcelona by Philip and Tessé would have decided the fate of the Spanish monarchy. It was little doubted that the conquest of the other northern towns would soon have followed; they never imagined that the Catalonian and Aragonese insurrection could exist under the pressure of 25,000 victorious Frenchmen, led by a marshal, and encouraged by the presence of a king. As to the handful of British veterans, who wandered among the rugged Sierras, and their romantic chief, in the confidence of overwhelming numbers they were regarded more with curiosity than with fear. But they knew not how to estimate aright the value of the extraordinary genius of the man who led this insurrection, and the remnant of the English army. To him difficulties

were a delight, obstacles but "the stepping-stones to success." Peterborough was well aware of the importance of Barcelona, but he was far from considering its loss as the loss of Spain. His far-seeing prudence had provided for that contingency. In his frequent journeys through the country lying between the Ebro and Barcelona, he had made himself fully acquainted with its resources, its passes, and its strongholds. He had won the confidence and affection of the warlike population, and learned thoroughly to understand their character. While they listened with wonder to tales of his daring and achievements that were worthy of the flower of Saracenic chivalry, they forgot the meagre figure and the strangeness of manner which might rather have recalled the hero of La Mancha. Even the grave English soldiery had learned to fall in with his humour; led by him they laid aside the national spirit of grumbling, and with shoeless feet, hungry bodies, and empty pockets, followed him cheerfully whithersoever he went. In case even of the fall of Barcelona, Peterborough was

determined that Philip should not march back again to his capital. There were three different routes by which this might be attempted, and he had well considered them all. The first was by the sea-side, through Taragona and Tortosa into Castile; this road lay through a barren country, where there would be much difficulty in supporting 25,000 men; and to the natural obstacles his skill had added others of an artificial nature, which rendered it almost impossible that an army could march that way.

The central road was in several places only rendered practicable by cuttings into the solid rock, made with immense labour; it lay however through a more fertile country. At one spot the road had been hewn out of the side of a mountain for more than two miles; this, by somewhat of the same labour, was soon rendered impassable. Here he employed many thousands of the country people under a few of his own officers.

The third or northernmost route lay through the Catalonian hills towards the sources of the Ebro, and Lerida, one of the strongest places in

Spain, interposed with a sufficient garrison. There were also numbers of old castles and towns in the mountains, each of which would have served to interrupt and embarrass the enemy; and all the cattle and provisions in this direction had been removed to places of safety.

These three routes being thus rendered as secure as forethought could make them, the only great danger to the cause lay in the possibility of the King's person falling into the enemy's hands. By remaining in the mountains near Barcelona, Peterborough hoped that in any extreme emergency he could break through the besieging camp, and hold his ground sufficiently for a time to enable Charles to escape. Indeed it is on record that at the very time when affairs seemed most unpromising at Barcelona, Peterborough wrote cheerfully to the Duke of Savoy to state, that he was in much better circumstances than was generally supposed; that the "French officers, ignorant of the situation of the country, would be astonished at the difficulties that would oppose them in advancing

even after success; and that if the siege were raised they would be forced to abandon Spain; while all the western frontier would be clear for the progress of Lord Galway and Das Minas to Madrid."

Peterborough's favourite scheme now, as formerly, was that the King should at once march upon Madrid, and proclaim himself in his capital. He argued that the royal presence would encourage the well affected, and dismay the adherents of France, while many important towns only waited for such an opportunity to declare themselves; that at the same time the passes upon the frontier could be held by a small force against the French, should they attempt to return into Spain. Unanswerable as were these arguments, they were for a time unheeded by the German court: finally, however, Peterborough's pertinacity so far prevailed that Charles agreed to hold a council of war to discuss the case.

The King himself assisted at this solemn council: there were the Portuguese ambassador,

the two English envoys, Lichtenstein the German favourite, the British and Dutch admirals, the new field-marshals, and the Earl of Peterborough. Strange to say, this incongruous assembly came to an unanimous resolution that the daring proposition of the commander-in-chief should be adopted. They record their opinion in these terms: — "That considering the present circumstances of affairs, it would be best to carry on the operations in the kingdom of Valencia, where we should not only enjoy the advantage of the assistance of the fleet, which would save great expenses and troubles, which the army would be liable to in a march to Aragon; there being no other body in Spain, that could embarrass the speedy conquest of that kingdom, but that small one of the Count de las Torres: routing this, the kingdom of Valencia would be free, Mercia would submit, and the most convenient way would be open to proceed with the army towards the capital, besides the advantages gotten by inclining towards the Portuguese army, being able to resist any force the French can

make, in order to hinder the entire conquest of the continent of Spain."

Having come to this decision, the council then determined the amount of force to be left in the different northern garrisons: 1500 English, and 1150 Spaniards at Barcelona; 1600 English and Dutch, with 1500 Spaniards at Gerona; 850 Dutch and Spanish at Lerida; and 500 Spaniards at Tortosa. This disposition left available for the field under Peterborough 2300 English and Dutch, with 2200 Spanish infantry, and 2000 cavalry, half of which was British, with 20 pieces of ordnance of different dimensions. It was also arranged that the King should take up his quarters at Tortosa until the road was cleared for his advance upon Madrid, and that 400 dragoons should be left for his body guard.

Peterborough having, as he hoped, carried his point, embarked with all the English and Dutch infantry, who were too destitute of baggage necessaries to undertake a march, while the cavalry took the route by Tortosa to Valencia.

It will be observed that the strength of the whole army in the east of Spain, as shown by the distribution of the council of war, amounted to no more than 6500 men; subsequently, even this number was diminished by the vacillating Charles to 4500. From on board the ship "Somerset" Peterborough wrote a witty and characteristic letter to Lord Halifax, complaining bitterly of the circumstances that surrounded him. "There cannot be worse company than a beggarly German and a proud Spaniard, particularly to my humour." He then favourably contrasts the black-eyed Señoras of Valencia with their sombre husbands, in a style too warm and racy to admit of repetition. From this he passes on to graver matters. "Ministers will neither give me men nor money, and my friends will neither give me letters of business nor gossip." He challenges Lord Halifax to a correspondence, and concludes: "I am off in this ship to Valencia, to try if I can find my way to Madrid in this consternation, and thence to London. We have saved kingdoms in spite of the King who would

abandon them, and we have waged more dangerous war with ministers than with enemies. Lord Galway and the Portuguese generals pass all understanding. I shall do my best. Let neither man nor woman forgive me if it be my fault. My Lord, I am so stung by mosquitoes that I am not able to write with my own hand."

For a right understanding of the events in Peterborough's next campaign, we must turn awhile to the allied army on the side of Portugal. There the troops of Philip had been reduced to 5000 men, in order to strengthen the Catalonian invasion, whilst Lord Galway, and the Portuguese general, Das Minas, opposed them with a quadruple force.

Portugal has certainly proved far from fertile in the production of great men; among her sons, even the moderate merits of the Marquis das Minas give him a prominent place. His race was ancient, and illustrious in his own country. He had begun his military life at the early age of fourteen; at the time now indicated he was in his seventieth year; he had performed a long and

honourable service, both in the army and in the civil service of his king. His age and experience had not even yet quenched the ardour of his temper, or softened a disposition naturally obstinate; he had practised the art of war through more than half a century, but knew little of the theory of his profession; he was brave and honest, but headstrong and narrow-minded. Altogether even this combination of qualities made him a "bright particular star," in the dim firmament of Portuguese glory.

The allied generals were paralysed by the evils of joint authority; the Portuguese obstinately refused to abate in any portion of their rights; and the English chief, in order to secure their co-operation, made concessions of certain matters of punctilio, for which he was afterwards severely censured by the British government.

The skilful and gallant Duke of Berwick had assumed the command of Philip's scanty army at the end of March. But he found himself too weak to attempt anything, beyond an observation of the allies' movements. They took Alcantara,

without much resistance, on the 14th of April, and then pushed along the Tagus, driving him before them, to the Bridge of Almaraz, only a few days' march from the capital. There they halted to await news from Barcelona. Lord Galway objected to this delay; he proposed that they should either advance upon Madrid, or fall back upon the frontier, and lay siege to some of the disaffected towns. The latter alternative was adopted, and they began their retreat towards Portugal on the 11th of May, the same day that Philip retreated from Barcelona. So that at the opposite frontiers of Spain, two large armies retreated before two others, greatly weaker than themselves, and these discreditable events nearly counterbalanced each other.

The allies first attacked Ciudad Rodrigo, which held out for a week; there the news reached them of Peterborough's wonderful successes: they then turned once more, pushed on to Salamanca in high spirits, and with little further delay marched upon Madrid. Berwick could hardly throw any difficulty in the way of these

operations, and was still forced to content himself with observing them. Under these circumstances the Duke wrote to Philip, earnestly entreating him not to venture to the capital, from whence he must inevitably be driven in a few days, but to throw himself under the shelter of the strong walls of Burgos, once the chief of the Castilian cities. There he might hold his court in safety, secure of the attachment of the inhabitants to his cause. Marshal Tessé, on the other hand, urged Philip to retire to Paris from Perpignan, probably that he might be there more directly under the control of his imperious grandfather. He had, however, disregarded both counsels alike, and set out forthwith for Madrid. The Duke of Berwick, probably nettled at the independent action of the young monarch, attributed this audacious step to a motive, which the stern warrior contemptuously indicates as "impatience to join his Queen."

Philip had reached Madrid on the 5th of June, almost unattended, and had found it, as Berwick had foretold, untenable. He then, at length,

consented to the Duke's counsel, insomuch as to remove his court and the public tribunals to Burgos. The Queen, also, proceeded there, but in most unqueenly discomfort, owing to the difficulties of the treasury, and the poverty of the country through which she had to pass. Philip remained at Madrid a few days longer, vainly endeavouring to procure money, and then, accompanied by many of his nobles, joined Berwick's little army in the Guadarama mountains.

On the 25th of June, the advance guard of the allies occupied Madrid, and two days afterwards, Galway and Das Minas entered, but were coldly received by the inhabitants. The generals took up their quarters in the Prado, encamped their troops there, and proclaimed King Charles; then sank into an inaction which lost the crown of Spain. Had they pursued Berwick, he must either have been destroyed, or driven beyond the Ebro. Incapacity itself is hardly a sufficient explanation for their subsequent conduct; their troops were allowed to indulge in unbridled excesses, rendering them at the same time odious

to the inhabitants, and relaxing all the bands of discipline. "Their halt," says the indignant Peterborough, in a letter to General Stanhope, "is as fatal as was Hannibal's at Capua."

Meanwhile, however, the apparent success of Charles had brought the usual result of defection from the ranks of the weaker party. Toledo, under the influence of the widowed Queen and Cardinal Portocarrero, declared for the House of Austria; the Conde de Santa Cruz betrayed the important arsenal of Cartagena to the British fleet, and all Aragon peaceably reverted to the rule of Charles.

Such was the hopeful condition of the cause to which Peterborough had devoted the desires of his heart and the energies of his mind, when the weakness of his puppet king threw all these glorious prospects to the winds. No sooner had the British chief sailed from Barcelona, than the spirit of his counsel was counteracted by unworthy intrigue. The Marshal Uhlefeldt was appointed Governor of Catalonia, instead of the Count de Noyelles. The latter was strongly

recommended by Peterborough on account of his military merits, and was also highly popular among the Catalans as a distinguished countryman. The people repeatedly addressed themselves to the general for the reversal of this appointment, and he again and again pressed their petition on the King by letters which were as strongly worded as propriety permitted. But he urged in vain, and only succeeded in obtaining the promise that De Noyelles should be otherwise provided for. His indignation knew no bounds when it subsequently appeared that the capricious King had altered the whole plan of the campaign, which had been so solemnly arranged, and accepted the disastrous advice of his German favourite Prince Lichtenstein, and of the rash and imprudent Conde de Cifuentes*; but we anticipate.

Peterborough was welcomed at Valencia with the warmest acclamations. He was already beloved by the people, and the glories of his former successes under their walls needed not in their

* See Appendix, pp. 6—11.

eyes the crown which the relief of Barcelona had added to his fame. He was received with almost the honours, and probably with quite the affection which would have been accorded to royalty itself. The gratification of his vanity, however, or his personal indulgence, were not permitted to interfere with his public duty. As soon as the formalities of his reception were over, he applied himself with his customary vivacity to the objects of the campaign. He raised a regiment of dragoons, and organised them in six weeks. He procured the necessary horses with indefatigable industry, at the moderate price of 10*l.* each. It was justly said of him, that, however liberal of his own money, no one ever was more frugal of that of the public, and that "he had the art of maintaining an army without funds, as well as that of taking towns without men." The very day his new dragoons were mounted, he marched them upon Castile.

All this time Lord Galway remained idle, neither recruiting his forces, nor forming stores of any kind; and, worse than all, joining in the

German intrigue, by which Charles was induced to abandon the plan of marching to the capital under Peterborough's escort. In this may be plainly seen the jealousy of the allied generals at Madrid towards their brilliant rival in Catalonia. Already his deeds had not only thrown theirs into shade, but into contrast; and they meanly argued, that should he carry the King to the capital at the head of the veterans of Barcelona and Valencia, he would reap the undivided glory of the conquest of the Spanish monarchy. They hated him too, not less for his faults than for his virtues: they hated his imperious temper; his fantastic vanity irritated their self-love, and his contemptuous dislike to them was repaid with ample interest.

After three weeks' constant labour in organising his army, and "submitting to the drudgery of the lowest offices," Peterborough sent 2000 men under the command of Lieut.-General Wyndham to besiege Requena. This town was neither important by population or strength; it was only defensible from the position of the houses, which,

being built "in a circle consecutively, composed the wall." It lay, however, upon the high road to Madrid, at the distance of about thirty miles from Valencia, and its possession was necessary for the projected movement. The garrison resisted for some days, but surrendered on a mine being driven under an old castle which formed part of the wall. By the capitulation the inhabitants were left at liberty, but the regular troops became prisoners of war. Leaving a newly raised Spanish regiment in possession, General Wyndham pushed on for Cuenca, a considerable city on the same route.

At a little distance from this city there was an old castle of some strength which held out until Wyndham brought up his artillery; the defenders then retreated within the walls. The British summoned them to surrender, which summons was at first refused with insolence; however, after three days' bombardment, and some loss on both sides, they capitulated, and the Earl of Duncannon's regiment took possession of the

gates. Wyndham then proclaimed King Charles in due form.

The road being thus secured, Peterborough wrote to Charles that "nothing remained to hinder him from reaching Madrid with even a small escort of horse, and that he thought a king needed not much persuasion to take possession of a crown, when 'twould be rather a journey of pleasure than a march, and this to be easily performed in a fortnight's time."

When Peterborough found that there was a delay in the motions of the Court, despite the complete readiness of everything for their reception on the Valencia route, his suspicions became excited. He urged Charles again and again not to delay, and his entreaties were strengthened by those of Stanhope, who, in answer to Charles' statement that he had "no becoming equipage with which to enter his capital," exclaimed, "Sire, our William III. entered London in a hackney, with a cloak bag behind it, and was made king not many weeks after!" So incredible did it appear that this favourable moment should be

allowed to pass, that a rumour actually arose, and reached Peterborough at Valencia, that the King was dead, embalmed, and buried.

Charles at length set out, one month after the time originally arranged, and proceeded to Taragona. Great was the surprise of the British general, and of the envoy, when they were informed that he had thence altered his course, and taken the fatal route of Saragoza. Peterborough still resolved to leave no means untried to alter this calamitous resolution: he sent couriers with urgent letters to the Court, day after day; he prevailed upon a deputation of the Valencian nobility to follow with the same purpose; and transmitted the opinion of a council of war, which was unanimous in earnestly pressing the King to retrace his steps.

Colonel Pepper was the bearer of the last of these despatches, with which he overtook the King near Saragoza: for a time the good counsel seemed to prevail, and the English officer was even sent back with an assent; but hardly was he out of the camp, when a French officer in the

Portuguese service arrived from Galway and Das Minas, again urging Charles to hasten on by the route they had suggested. While the weak-minded prince hesitated, the Conde de Cifuentes again pressed his evil advice, and carried his point. Colonel Pepper was recalled, and informed of the final determination of the Court to proceed by Saragoza.

After this, the Conde de Cifuentes appropriated all the merit of the King's decision, and, with a view of ingratiating himself with the Aragonese, addressed them in the following letter:—"I have used my utmost endeavours, and at last have succeeded in bringing the King by the way of Aragon; which his Majesty complied with the more easily, being satisfied that, since the services you offered were free and voluntary, not, like those of the Catalans and Valencians, out of any fear or compulsion, you had a better title to his Majesty's presence among you."

Strangely enough, Peterborough's enemies in England, of whom there were not a few, accused

him of prompting the King's march to Saragoza, and of having then refused the necessary supplies of money, which were in his hands to bestow. On his return from Spain, he caused his letters to the King, at this time, to be published, which completely refuted, if they did not silence, his detractors. This publication, dated 1707, still exists; but it may not be unwelcome to reproduce here a few of the more important extracts.

"Valencia, 5th of July, 1706.

"Sire,

"Cartagena has submitted * * the inhabitants without terms, to be disposed of at your pleasure. * * * The way is so free betwixt this and Madrid, that the deserters pass three or four in a company: your Majesty may pass to your capital in this way, as in a most profound peace, * * * It is properly but a journey of a few days, but by Aragon it is the business of six weeks or two months, * * * the march also dangerous and uncertain. * * * * The resolution of your Majesty's coming in person this way, is in no wise an objection to the march of the troops necessary by the side of Aragon. On the contrary, when it is known that your Majesty is at Madrid, and capable of giving them the proper assist-

ance, there will be no difficulty made in that kingdom. Sire, it is only in your capital where the proper and necessary orders can be given, * * * If your Majesty does not take this determination, you will be pleased to give me advice of it, that I may immediately take post and come to you.

"I have borrowed the money necessary to put your Majesty's troops in march, and it seems to me there is nothing wanting but your person at Madrid. God Almighty bring your Majesty thither without delay!"

"Valencia, 6th of July.

"Sire,

"The city of Valencia thought themselves obliged in duty to let your Majesty know how extremely they desired that your Majesty would be pleased to honour them with your presence; * * * * I have received letters from the admirals: neither they, Sire, nor I, know what to say in this conjuncture. It seems as if everything were at a stand-still, till your Majesty gives life to the whole by your presence in the capital. * * * * Assuring your Majesty on my part of a diligence to serve you, and of a most earnest desire to see you, the greatest prince of the age."

"July 10th.

"Sire,

"If it is no more proper to speak to your Majesty upon the resolutions you have taken, it is now my

duty to do all in my power to sustain what you have resolved upon. * * * * You will see, Sire, by the Queen's letter, that her Majesty has been pleased to increase my burthen, which was but too weighty before; she has sent me orders and instructions, plain and clear, upon the present state of affairs: if I had received them before, I should have represented (if possible), with more force, the necessity of pressing with the utmost diligence to Madrid by the secure way of Valencia." * * * *

"I obey your Majesty's orders with relation to the regiments of Aumada and Colbatch; though I must take the liberty to say they are so far advanced in Castile that their march by Madrid would prove the shortest and most practicable way to go to Saragoza.

"I see by M. Zinzerling's letter, how much your Majesty is in want of money. I have some little come from England, and will send it immediately to Saragoza, * * * * esteeming myself most happy when I can be useful to your Majesty, whose glory and establishment I desire above all things."

It would appear, that the true reason of the King's yielding to the solicitations of Galway and of the creatures of his Court, was, that they had worked upon his vanity in representing the slights which the haughty independence of Peterborough

had cast upon him. The great services of the English Earl could not be denied; but Charles was impatient at the sense of obligation which his presence recalled.† There are traces of this feeling in the following extract, although, at the same time, it clears Peterborough from the absurd and malicious imputation of having been the advocate of the Saragoza route. The tone of expression in this note affords further illustration of the familiar idiom, "the ingratitude of princes."

"My Lord,

"I owe you answers to four of yours, * * * which I have received in different places. You represent to me the importance of my arriving as soon as possible at Madrid, and propose to me the way of Requena as the shortest and securest from insults. You tell me the dispositions you have made to accompany my person, and moreover, offer me to come in person, and concert the rest which might contribute to our good success; for all which I am very much obliged to you, but being upon the road to Aragon, and engaged to pursue my march that way, * * * * * I consider that the journey you must make

† See Appendix, pp. 11—13.

to Saragoza to meet me would be too long and difficult; and since the fleet is expected each moment, I conceive your presence very necessary where you are, to direct that important affair of the Duke of Savoy, upon which I have so fully expressed myself in some of my former letters."

"CHARLES."

Thus, in this curt and unprincely letter, did Charles reject the proffered service of his ablest friend, and with it all chance of the crown of Spain. And thus, by his uncourtierlike honesty, and, it must be added, by his ungovernable temper, did Peterborough lose the dearest objects of his ambition—to decide the War of the Succession, and to humble the pride of France. He gave some vent to his indignation in the following letter to Lord Halifax:—

"That torrent of good fortune which overcomes all difficulties, and that infatuation which seems in every place to have seized the enemy, dissipates those fears I might justly have of shipwreck in the very port: but it is a cruel circumstance, that after so many escapes and so many dangers overcome, to see

all so injudiciously exposed by the most unaccountable reasons that ever were taken.

"You may have received by Italy, before these came to hand, some letters which I writ in the uncertainty of what the Portuguese might do. By all accounts the least opposition would turn them back. It was hard enough to make them walk to Madrid, though meeting no resistance. * * * * Judge of my mortification and grief to see so glorious and sure a game exposed to what I am going to represent. If I were at the head of the 6000 Spanish horse, which are very good, I would be accountable with my life, that instead of the king's coming by Saragoza to Madrid, * * * I would burn and destroy all that country. * * * * That I would at least delay his march till perhaps the French foot and horse might from Navarre come into Aragon. And then, give me leave to say, one battle would decide the fate of Spain."

Lord Galway and Das Minas exhibited their unworthy jealousy of Peterborough in various ways; among others, by leaving him completely uninformed of their proceedings, if their forty days of disastrous inactivity at Madrid can be so designated. There can be no doubt of inten-

tional slight, for two expresses from the Portuguese army passed through Valencia, on their way to the King, without being commissioned to give Peterborough any information. So extraordinary did this appear at the time, that the Earl obtained a certificate from the Portuguese officer that he had not letters to him from Galway and Das Minas.

The Earl's irritable temper was aroused by these marked discourtesies: he was not great enough in this instance to sacrifice his private resentment to the public good; he could not but have known from these messengers that Galway was actually in Madrid; and the subsequent untoward delay in the movement of the Valencian army was doubtless the result of his pique.

On the 26th of July, when much precious time had elapsed, Peterborough again summoned to a council of war the Conde de Cardona, Governor of Valencia, the Condes of Savella and Elda, with five of his own senior officers. After due consideration, they agreed unanimously that all the allied forces in those parts should march

directly upon Madrid, or to join the army of Portugal, as circumstances might require; and that once again the King should be entreated to come by way of Valencia. The troops were put in preparation accordingly. But, just before they started, letters came from the King, again desiring that Peterborough should send the forces under his command either to relieve the Duke of Savoy, or to reduce the Balearic Isles. The Earl, however, desired to be excused from executing these directions, and marched for Castile, as he and the council of war had previously determined.

The King had soon the conviction forced upon him of the wisdom of Peterborough's advice.* Instead of the triumphant procession from Saragoza to Madrid, which he had been promised, he found difficulties of a formidable nature. The whole of the centre and south of Spain was in arms; every town and village rose in insurrection against the allies; they only could be said to hold the ground they covered with their battalions.

* See Appendix, pp. 14—18.

At Salamanca and Toledo the people raised the standard of Philip; Andalusia contributed 18,000 men. The troops of Las Torres from Valencia, and those that had retreated under Tessé to Roussillon, had joined Berwick at Xadraque; and, more important perhaps than all, Philip had roused himself for the emergency; he addressed the troops, and animated them by the assurance, that he would "die at the head of the last squadron that remained faithful to his service."

Doubtless the ancient feud between the Spanish kingdoms was a great cause of this outburst of enthusiasm; the old Castilian pride was irritated to madness, when a king was about to be forced upon them by the fierce Catalans, whom they hated, and by the luxurious Valencians, whom they despised. Their religious feelings were outraged by the alliance of English heretics, and their national hatred was aroused by the presence of the Portuguese. It is probable that these influences were more powerful than their love for Philip and his French ministers.

On becoming aware of the state of things, Charles sent, in the utmost haste, to ask the aid of the great chief who had so often proved his mainstay in time of peril. The Earl instantly complied with the request for his presence, and, marching with all speed, overtook the King at Pastrana, on the 4th of August, and thence, on the following day, escorted him in safety to the army of Portugal at Guadalaxara. Even then the united strength of the allies did not exceed 18,000 men. In spite of their weakness, Lord Galway and the other allied chiefs were for delivering at once a general action: Peterborough, usually so impetuous, alone objected, remarking with bitterness, that the troops were not in a condition to render it advisable that the fate of Spain should then be risked on a battle. A skirmish on the following day, in which some battalions of the allies were thrown into discreditable confusion, tended to prove the wisdom of his counsel.

CHAP. XIV.

As may well have been supposed, Peterborough's arrival was the signal for a jealous outbreak among the rival generals. Who was to command in chief? Peterborough held the senior commission on account of his former appointment to the command in the West Indies; but it appears that Lord Galway held especial authority from England over all her armies in Spain. Peterborough argued, probably with truth, that his troops, who were given him for a particular service, were never meant to be included under the orders of the general who was sent to conduct the war from the side of Portugal; and he considered that he made a great personal sacrifice, for the sake of harmony, when he proposed that Das Minas, Lord Galway, the Dutch Count de Noyelles, should each command their own forces, receiving their orders only from the King.

Should this proposal not be accepted, he stated his willingness to leave his own military rank altogether in abeyance, and serve as a volunteer. It can never be known whether he was really sincere in this magnanimous offer; probably he did not know himself; but it is certain that his incapable rivals would rather have faced all the armies of France, than have had such a volunteer in their camp.

Lord Galway states that he himself offered the command to Peterborough, and to serve under his orders; at that time he daily expected a recall from England, by his own request. But Das Minas positively refused to surrender his pretensions, and the continued discussion excited great bitterness of feeling among them and their respective partisans.

But while this delicate question remained undecided, the affairs of the allies had become highly critical. Berwick, with an army now increased to 22,000 men, had nearly succeeded in surprising Galway. Lord Tyrawley had prevented a disastrous defeat by his vigilance, and by the

gallant defence of an outpost for two precious hours. The army, however, had been forced to a hasty retreat, and had not yet recovered from its confusion. The insurrection gained ground day by day; and such was the spirit manifested by the people, that Peterborough himself exclaimed with admiration, "All the force of Europe could not subdue Castile!"

Peterborough here made a proposal to the King, which would probably have led to many good results, had it been adopted. He offered to attempt the recovery of Madrid, if allowed a force of 5000 men. His plan was to seize the pass of Henarese, near Alcala, by which step he could either fight the enemy at an advantage, or secure a retreat; then occupy Alcala, and thence force his way to the capital. The plan, at first, met with the approbation of the King, and of all the generals; but delays were thrown in his way, and, in the meantime, the German favourites spared no pains to incense Charles against him, and to destroy confidence in his judgment. Another difficulty was the want of supplies for

the army, while awaiting the result of the expedition, as little preparation having been made for staying here as there was for pursuing the Duke of Berwick.

"His Excellency finding there were generals enough for the rest of the campaign, though, 'tis possible, there might be want of soldiers," announced his intention of obeying orders from Queen Anne, dated 12th June, and repeated on the 17th, to proceed to the assistance of the Duke of Savoy. Had his position in Spain been less disagreeable, it is probable that he would not have been in any great hurry to obey these commands. It is indeed, suggested, that when he informed Charles of his intention to go, he expected that he would have been besought to remain, and that he was bitterly chagrined when he found that his plan was acceded to with alacrity.

That no formality might be wanting, and that no excuse might be left to Peterborough for changing his mind, a council of war was held at the Palace of Guadalaxara, on the 9th of August,

to consider the despatches from England, and the Earl's determination upon them. Lord Galway, Das Minas, De Noyelles, Stanhope, and Prince Lichtenstein, were present, and all were unanimous in recommending that their fiery colleague should depart on his expedition as soon, and for as long a period, as possible. He was recommended, at the same time, to attempt the capture of Port Mahon, and was also charged by the King with a commission to borrow 100,000 pistoles, or any greater or smaller sum, at Genoa, on the security of the royal domains.

In deep mortification, and highly indignant against the weak and ungrateful prince whom he had served with such splendid success, Peterborough rode from the camp at Guadalaxara on the 11th of August. His escort only consisted of eighty dragoons, although at that time there were serious difficulties in the route to Valencia. From the hour of his departure, darkness fell upon the fortunes of the House of Austria in Spain.

Peterborough's journey was full of adventures.

He had not been long on the road, when he heard that all his baggage, consisting of eight waggon loads, had fallen into the enemy's hands in a most vexatious manner. On his leaving Valencia, he had ordered it to be sent after him to Guadalaxara, by the main route through Requena and Cuenca. When it arrived at the latter town, General Wyndham, who commanded there, forwarded it with a small escort. But when about twenty-four miles on their route, at the little town of Huete, a party of the Duke of Berwick's troops, bearing the English emblems, boughs in their hats, came into the town, crying out, "Long live Charles the Third!" Favoured by this stratagem they got close to the waggons, without having excited any suspicion. They then rushed upon the guard, and immediately overpowered it; plundered the convoy of everything worth taking, and then took their departure.

Peterborough was in no mood to bear this loss with philosophy; it was very considerable; besides his baggage, all his spare horses, carriages, and mules had been carried off, to the value of

not less than 8000*l.* There was no doubt, as it appeared on inquiry, that the inhabitants of Huete had joined in and profited by the plunder, as well as given information to Berwick's troopers. He therefore held them responsible. His first resolve was to lay the offending town in ashes, and, as he was joined by Wyndham within a few miles, he had ample power to do so. When he rode into Huete at the head of his escort of Killigrew's dragoons, he immediately summoned the magistrates and the clergy to meet him, and told them in decided terms that "they must find his baggage and the rogues that stole it." After the strictest search, however, they were able to find but a very small part of the missing articles. He still insisted, holding out terrible threats, which doubtless he would have carried into execution. They then offered to pay him 10,000 pistoles for his loss, or any other sum which he might choose to name as right. This offer, however, he magnificently refused; "But," said he, "you are honest gentlemen. For my part I will sit content with my loss,

and be satisfied of the money, if you will bring all the corn of the district to the army, and it shall be faithfully applied to that use." The townsfolk were charmed at this clemency, as corn was far more easily to be procured than money. It was accordingly sent with good faith to Lord Galway's camp at Chincon, and proved a most seasonable supply, being sufficient for no less than six weeks' consumption for the whole army.*

Judging from Peterborough's character, this act of almost unparalleled magnanimity towards the rival generals, from whose injuries he was only then removing himself, was no other than a proud revenge upon men, who, while he despised their meaner intellects, had yet had the power to wound him in the tenderest point. Generous and magnificent as he was at all times, and sincere as he was in his wishes for the public good, he was doubtless more gratified in heaping coals of fire upon the heads of his rivals, than sacks of corn in their granaries. Some years

* See Appendix, pp. 18—20.

afterwards, when the various claims arising out of the Spanish war, against the government, were being arranged in London, it was suggested that he should demand payment on account of this transaction; but the proposal was at once rejected with generous disdain. It should be added that his means were then far from affluent, especially in proportion to his openhanded liberality.

Peterborough so completely recovered his good temper after this opportunity of theatrical generosity, that he is next found engaged in an adventure at the same town, worthy of Theodore Hook. It has been before stated that he always "kept up a good correspondence with the ladies and the clergy wherever he went," especially with the former. One of the priests, who had been of the number of those brought before him, chanced to mention that at the threat of burning the town "one of the finest ladies in all Spain" had taken refuge in the convent. Peterborough determined to judge for himself of the subject of this superlative praise, but there was great diffi-

culty in gaining his point; the rules of the order were strict, and the Earl's habits were known to be just the reverse. The lady abbess would not have permitted him on any account to visit her charge, but he was not to be baulked in his will. The convent was situated upon a hill over the town; a lucky thought struck him,—it would be an admirable site for a fort to protect the position. He immediately sent for an engineer officer, and having given out his intention, proceeded with him to the nunnery, and demanded admission for the purpose of tracing out the lines of the defences in the garden. The plot succeeded; the lady abbess came out in terror, with her fair sisters, among others the fairest, and earnestly entreated that their convent might be spared. "The divine oratory of the one, and the beautiful charms of the other, prevailed; so his Lordship left the fortification to be the work of some future generation." It proved, however, that it was not on account of any hurried departure from Huete that these important defences were postponed.

At length Peterborough tore himself away and marched for Valencia, still accompanied only by Killigrew's dragoons, having sent on Wyndham's brigade to join Lord Galway. One night when he arrived at the little town of Campillo, he received information of a most savage cruelty perpetrated that day at a neighbouring village upon some English soldiers. They were a small detachment of convalescents from the hospital at Cuenca, who were proceeding under the command of an officer, to join Wyndham's battalion of the guards, to which they belonged. The night before they had slept at the village, and in the morning were marching out unconscious of danger, when a shot in the back from a house laid the officer dead, and at this signal the peasants rushed in upon the poor weak invalids, killing several, and not even sparing the men's wives, who had accompanied their husbands. The survivors were reserved for a more horrible death than that by the knife or the sword; they were dragged up a hill near the village, on the summit of which there was a deep pit; down

this hole they were cast one by one, shrieking horribly, till silenced in death.

No sooner was Peterborough informed of this atrocious outrage than he ordered the trumpets to sound "to horse;" the weary dragoons, after their day's march, had hoped for the luxury of rest, but instantly answered the unexpected summons, and, when they knew the cause, burned with impatience for revenge. They hastened to the village, but, to their great chagrin, found that the assassins had fled, and that hardly any of the inhabitants remained. There was, however, a sad confirmation of the truth of the tale in the clothes of the murdered British guardsmen, which they discovered hidden in the church. The only person found, against whom strong accusation could be brought, was the Sacristan, who, it was alleged, had taken an active part in the slaughter. Peterborough had not time to enter into the particulars of this man's guilt or innocence, so he hung him up to his own knocker. At that moment the Earl quieted any doubts as to the justice of this execution, by the general

idea that he could not go far wrong if he hung up any or every Spaniard that he could lay hands upon.

Having taken this instalment of vengeance, he went to the murderous pit; there he found one poor soldier still alive, who had been saved in a singular manner by seizing some bushes in his fall: from him all the particulars of the transaction were obtained, and they so much exasperated the Earl that he gave orders for burning the village to the ground: when this act of retribution was fully accomplished he returned to Campillo. The next morning he continued his route, and in two days reached Valencia without any further adventures.

The journey, with all its incidents of vexation, amusement, and horror, was not sufficient occupation for Peterborough's untiring energies. He wrote repeatedly to Stanhope at head quarters, freely tendering advice to him for the conduct of the allies as the only person that "can support this business." He also sent a letter to his friend and patroness the Duchess of Marlborough, full

of good sense, humour, oddity, and abuse of the Spaniards. On arriving at Valencia he found that the Duke of Berwick had chivalrously returned him all the letters and papers unopened, which had been lost in the captured baggage; what a world of wisdom and folly,—of great thoughts and of ridiculous fancies,—of important projects and contemptible nothings, did they probably contain!

Peterborough's arrival at Valencia confirmed the rumour which had preceded him, that he no longer retained the command. The inhabitants deeply regretted the loss to the cause of his brilliant genius. They had the fullest confidence in him,—a confidence justified by a series of successes that appeared almost fabulous; besides he was personally most popular among them; he had with them restrained his wayward and impetuous temper, he had won them by a thousand acts of generosity and kindness; they had seen him unelated in triumphs which would have disturbed the balance of ordinary minds; and they now saw him bear up with apparent

cheerfulness against spiteful rivalry and royal ingratitude. But his cheerfulness was only apparent; he burned with indignation at the unworthy treatment which he had received; and he wrote of the state of affairs to his friends elsewhere, in terms of the bitterest sarcasm. On the 25th of August, in a letter to Admiral Wassenaer, he says,—"Mismanagement ruins us; 200 officers and soldiers have been murdered in Castile, on their way to join us. We have come to this from being sure of the monarchy of Spain; we are now worse than doubtful. We are in the midst of an enemy's country, without supplies or a strong place; the enemy stronger in horse, and almost equal to us in foot. We lost Madrid like fools, and this is done by the corrupt councillors of the young Prince; the generals were also very blameable. When I was there, I was put off and hampered; but at that crisis I got the happy orders to command the fleet. I took Cuenca, and am come through great perils to the borders of Valencia safe."

On the same day, he wrote to Admiral Sir

John Leake, with whom he had had a misunderstanding, even before they had met on this occasion; his intention was conciliatory, and he ends by entreating Sir John not to fulfil a threat which he had made of resigning on Peterborough's being appointed to the joint command of the fleet.

For a few days he remained inactive at Valencia, conciliating, however, still further the goodwill of the inhabitants, by his liberal hospitality in balls and bull fights. At this time an incident occurred, from which it required all his influence and popularity to prevent a most tragic result. Two English officers had employed their abundant leisure in paying court to two nuns in a neighbouring convent; at that time it was the custom to relax the usually severe restrictive discipline of these sisters, for a short period every evening, by permitting them to converse through the grates with their friends and acquaintances. The officers took advantage of this opportunity, and succeeded in winning the affections and confidence of the unfortunate ladies.

The fair Valencians, with the characteristic ardour of the South, were ready to sacrifice home and fame, and even to risk the awful death their Church decrees to such as violate their conventual oaths, for the sake of their unworthy lovers. Vows were exchanged, on one side with uncalculating truth and devotion, on the other with falsehood and selfish frivolity. The nuns agreed to escape from the convent; the plot was laid, the day and hour appointed. By a rule of the society each sister took it in turn to hold the keys of the gates in successive weeks; when this duty fell to the lot of one of the two ladies who intended to escape, she gave notice to the English officers, and they came at night and carried off both the nuns without difficulty or interruption.

Next morning, when the sisters were missed the whole city of Valencia was in an uproar; they were highborn, and the rage of their haughty relations knew no bounds. Vengeance was vowed against all concerned, and the young men of their families took up arms to seek the offenders and wash out the mortal infamy in blood. The

English officers had been too public and frequent in their attentions to leave any doubt as to their complicity; accordingly, it was immediately demanded of Lord Peterborough, that they should be given up to expiate their crime. To their eternal disgrace be it spoken, they had at the first alarm made their escape, leaving the victims of their caitiff passion to infamy and death. The hapless ladies, forsaken in their utmost need by the base men for whom they had sacrificed themselves, knew not where to fly. There was no friend or brother to save them, for those nearest in blood were keenest in the pursuit of vengeance. Accustomed only to the tranquillity of the convent, they were bewildered when beyond its walls; helpless, hapless, they fell at once into the hands of their pursuers.

A brief trial sufficed in such a case; they were convicted and sentenced to the terrible punishment of being slowly starved to death. The condemnation soon reached Peterborough's ears; he was moved with the deepest compassion for these victims of perfidy, and determined to spare

no means to save them from their dreadful fate. He well knew that his utmost skill would be required to gain his object. Lest that he should be thought to have countenanced the crime, he inveighed in the bitterest terms and in hearty sincerity, against the English officers who had caused it; but at the same time he urged his earnest intercession for the unhappy ladies. For a long time his efforts were vain; broken vows and infidelity in the brides of the Church could only, according to the infernal code of Spain, be expiated in the frightfullest of deaths.

The nearest relations of the condemned were the most implacable against them; they would hear of no mercy, and even became enraged against Peterborough for his generous intercession. They only recognised the ties of blood in the dishonour of their house,—they only recognised the religion of the Son of God in the accursed law of the Spanish Church.

Notwithstanding the apparent hopelessness of the case, the Earl persevered. He had determined that these victims of the creed which he

hated and despised, should not suffer; had he failed in his gentler arguments, there is little doubt that he would have shielded them by the strong arm, whatever might have been the hazard. Fortunately force was not needed; his great influence, and the love that he had won in every Valencian heart, at length prevailed so far as to cause the penalty to be suspended. Money did the rest; by means of an enormous bribe the condemned sisters were pardoned, and the convent received them safely again within its gloomy walls. Perhaps the prayer that rose from those two repentant hearts for their erring but generous deliverer, was not the least sincere and acceptable of those which the sisterhood of the Valencian convent addressed day by day, to the throne of the Most High.

From the gaieties, blandishments, and interests of Valencia, Peterborough was soon called by a sense of duty, to Alicante; news arrived that the place was holding out obstinately against General Gorges, who besieged it by land, and Sir John Leake, who battered it from the sea.

General Mahony commanded in the town, and conducted the defence with courage and skill. The walls, however, fell under the continuous fire; and the garrison, abandoning the town to its fate, withdrew into the castle. Upon this the sailors landed and carried the town without delay; as soon as they had overcome the little opposition which was offered, they commenced a general plunder. The hapless inhabitants then opened their gates and admitted Gorges with his army, in hopes that he would establish order. This he pretended to do, and obliged the sailors to return to their ships. He next made proclamation that all the townspeople should carry their valuable effects into the great church for better security, which order was joyfully obeyed. Incredible as it may appear, it is stated by a worthy English officer who was present in the country, that these goods were afterwards disposed of for the benefit of those who had as little right to them as the sailors from whom the deluded inhabitants fancied they were to be preserved.

Upon Peterborough's arrival at Alicante, Mahony surrendered the castle; his provisions were nearly exhausted, and there was scarcely a possibility of his being relieved. The terms of capitulation were liberal, and honourable to the vanquished.

The Earl found to his great mortification, that about the time of his arrival at Alicante, orders had reached the fleet, to the effect that in spite of his earnest application and the necessities of Charles, a number of the ships were to proceed immediately to the West Indies. This rendered the expedition against Minorca impossible, and nullified the resolution of the council of war at Guadalaxara. All that now remained for Peterborough to accomplish was, to secure and fortify the principal places in Valencia against insult from the enemy. With a view to determine the best course to be pursued for this purpose, and to consider a despatch from the King and Lord Galway, he summoned a council of war consisting of fourteen of his senior officers, at the Head Quarters at Alicante, on the 6th of Sep-

tember. The opinion was, that the forces at Alicante and in other Valencian towns could not be diminished by sending reinforcements to Castile, without endangering the whole country as far as Tortosa, and the communication with the sea. For the same reason it was deemed unadvisable that any of the troops in Valencia should be carried to the assistance of the Duke of Savoy in Italy; and should it be necessary to procure a force for that purpose, it would be better for the general interest to take it from the Catalonian garrisons.

The council of war further urged the great necessity that the army was in for money, and that the only hope of obtaining a supply was by Lord Peterborough obtaining it at Genoa, on the credit of the King and on the bills of the Marquis das Minas. The Castilian army was stated to be without pay; the troops discontented, mutinous, and given to plunder and rapine. This want of discipline in the troops had greatly increased the disaffection of the people, and many officers and soldiers of the allies had been assas-

sinated. They further acknowledged the hazards and difficulties to which the general would probably be exposed by sea, but also dwelt upon the great importance of his mission.

Peterborough sailed for Genoa, soon after this council of war; but his active spirit did not find sufficient occupation in negotiating the required loan, which, however, he soon accomplished. He engaged himself, at the same time, in the plans and prospects of the Duke of Savoy, and with him concerted schemes for future performance, never to be realised. His idea then was to reduce the war in Spain to the defensive, and attempt a vigorous invasion of France. While in Italy his self-love was gratified by receiving a letter from General Stanhope, from which the following is an extract:—"I can only tell your Lordship in a few words, that since you left us, our affairs have gone 'de mal en pire.' Our whole army is quartered in the kingdom of Valencia, except a garrison in Cuenca, and another in Requena, the only two places we retain in Castile; and for these we are not without apprehensions. Our

horse is ruined. Your Lordship knows how well stocked with money you left us, and will consequently judge how impatiently we expect your return."

The Earl had exhibited his usual address in raising the required sum of 100,000*l.*, and had managed to obtain it, even under the difficult circumstances of the case, at a charge of only one per cent. above the current rate of exchange. Having thus succeeded beyond all expectation, he conveyed his loan to Barcelona, where he cast anchor on the 27th of December; and having there received an inkling that successful intrigues had been carried on by the Court, to injure him with ministers in England, while everything was going wrong during his absence, his bitterest feelings were aroused. In writing to Brigadier General Stanhope, on his route to Valencia, whither he proceeded by land, he gave vent to his angry and sarcastic humour.*

He arrived there on the 10th of January; and he, or rather the money which he had brought,

* See Appendix, pp. 21 22.

was received with apparent cordiality by the Court. He had the gratification of finding that some of those who loved him least, had regretted the loss of his important services; his enemies, too, had quarrelled among themselves, and upon his arrival each wished to attach him to his side of the question. The Count de Noyelles especially paid court to him, with the view of engaging him in opposition to Lord Galway.

Peterborough, however, now occupied no official position at Valencia; from the high command which he had so lately held, he had become only "a volunteer in Spain." He soon found out with indignation, that the intrigues of Charles and his German Court against him in England, had been only too successful. The English government were wearied of constant complaints against him by others, and against others by him. His irritable and capricious temper was perpetually betraying itself in his correspondence; in short, he was troublesome, a heinous offence in ministerial eyes, and this no abilities or services could balance. He was,

therefore, ordered to England as a culprit, to give an account of his actions; and the Treasury Bills which he had so ably negotiated at Genoa, were dishonoured, on the plea of his not having been justified in giving what they were pleased to call, "exorbitant interest."

The King, however, considered Peterborough's services in the matter of the loan to be of so important a nature, that he addressed him an instrument, of which an extract follows: —

"Illustrious Lord, Earl of Peterborough you have lately put in execution in your voyage to Italy, with my approbation, and with the opinions of all the generals and ministers who were with me in my city of Guadalaxara at the time of your departure; obtaining in that voyage most known advantages to my service, and that considering that in the present state of my affairs, much greater benefit may redound to my crown by the propositions lately made for your return to Italy, * * * not doubting but that your approved conduct in this, and all other the intended services in those countries, will obtain the execution of what shall be most proper and favourable to the public interests, and those of my monarchy, continuing in that vigour which is alway

found to distinguish your actions, and which recommends those measures which your zeal and ability have adjusted with the Duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene, * * * agreeing in opinion with the representations you have made for your speedy return to Italy, that your personal assistance may give warmth and procure favourable events to the important affairs depending in those parts, * * * trusting that your zeal and love for my service will engage you with that sincerity which you have ever practised * * * you shall find in my royal presence all the demonstrations of satisfaction you have reason to expect.

"CHARLES."

At the very time of writing this complimentary letter, the King had been mean enough to insinuate complaints against Peterborough at the English Court, principally, it is supposed, at the instigation of the ungrateful De Noyelles, who, at the same moment, wrote to the Earl in a strain of fulsome compliment. Strange to say, the principal accusation against him was his having left the army at Guadalaxara; a step to which he had been compelled by the decision of a council of war, of which those who complained of his

conduct were members. The ground of complaint was not, however, altogether disagreable to Peterborough's self-love; for to his absence they attributed all the disasters which had since occurred.

His friend, Dean Swift, thus indignantly describes his treatment: — "The only general who, by a course of conduct and fortune almost miraculous, had nearly put us into possession of the kingdom of Spain, was left wholly unsupported, exposed to the envy of his rivals, disappointed by the caprices of a young and inexperienced Prince, under the guidance of a rapacious German minister, and at last called home in discontent."

Another ostensible ground of complaint against him was, that his habits were too lively and informal, and that his despatches showed more wit than discretion. To the want of the grave business-like deportment behind which mediocrity so often shelters itself, may be attributed, in a great degree, the success which envy and malice obtained in arresting his brilliant career.

CHAP. XV.

THE wisdom of Peterborough's decision in retaining the garrisons of Alicante and the other Valencian towns, was soon fully proved. By a series of petty disasters Galway had been compelled to withdraw from Castile, and was only too glad to avail himself of the positions which had been so judiciously held, with a view to the probability of such a contingency.

In spite of his wrong, Peterborough was too magnanimous to withhold his assistance to the cause which the Valencian Court so unworthily represented. He remained for some time, and took part in several councils of war. At one, held on the 4th of February, he delivered his opinion in writing, strongly advocating a defensive war:—"An offensive war is one of *éclat* and reputation to the generals and the troops, but the defensive is often of most utility to the public." He

proceeded to say, that the awakened spirit of the Castilians, and the superiority of the enemy's cavalry, would make it dangerous to march upon Madrid, and impossible to hold it; that a battle would be unequal, and probably disastrous. If the allies were to content themselves by holding their present positions, the enemy's horse would soon be distressed for forage, and would, probably, be withdrawn into France. He contended that the mortal blow must be struck by the army of Italy, and that Prince Eugene entirely concurred in his opinions, as to the defensive war in Spain. The power of Lewis XIV. once broken, the conquest of Spain could easily be completed. Time showed how wise was that cautious counsel, which even the fiery Peterborough supported.

Stanhope was for offensive measures. He proposed to attack the Duke of Berwick, as soon as some expected reinforcements arrived, to occupy Madrid once more, and that Charles should again appeal to the loyalty of Spain, from the palace of her kings. In this opinion he was

supported by public feeling in England, and by the Government. The Marquis Das Minas, Lord Galway, and nearly all the other generals, agreed with Stanhope; and, after a long and angry discussion, his plan was finally adopted.

This difference of opinion led to a personal hostility between Peterborough and Stanhope: in political views they had always widely differed. Subsequently, indeed, the Earl endeavoured to throw the whole blame of the campaign, which ended with the disastrous battle of Almanza, upon the Envoy, as having been the chief person who had urged offensive measures.

Peterborough felt it his duty still to remonstrate to the uttermost against this fatal decision. But at last the time of his departure arrived, and, with bitterness in his heart, he left that lovely land, which had been the theatre of his strange and brilliant military career. He left it in sorrow and in sadness, for he well knew that the cause, to which his best energies had been devoted, was waning fast. His services seemed already almost forgotten, and the Prince,

for whom he had nearly won a crown, had treated him with cold ingratitude.

But among the warm-hearted people of Spain, he was long and almost fondly remembered. He had led them to victory in the field, and in social life had fascinated them with his lively manners and sparkling wit. Although himself in the front rank of nobility, in a haughty and unsympathizing nation, he had treated, with considerate respect, their laws, their feelings, and even their prejudices. Although a heretic, he had never openly slighted their clergy, or their religion: although, perhaps, a republican in politics, he had always encouraged their loyalty, and had risked his life for their king. When he passed out, for the last time, through the gates of their beautiful city, the Valencians felt a mournful presage, that the guiding genius of their cause was gone for ever.

On the 14th of May, Peterborough embarked in the Resolution man-of-war, accompanied by the King of Spain's Envoy to the Court of Turin. Henry, his second son, M. P. for Malmesbury,

commanded the little squadron, which consisted of two frigates besides the Resolution — the Enterprize and the Milford Haven, a son of General Stanhope's being captain of the latter vessel. They sailed first for Barcelona, where they merely touched, and again weighed anchor.

Peterborough's love of adventure was near being gratified by an event which had well nigh cost him his liberty and his son's life. On the 5th day at sea they fell in with a French fleet of 6 men-of-war, 2 carrying eighty guns each, 2 seventy, 1 sixty-eight, and the other fifty-eight. The enemy immediately gave chase. It soon became apparent that the Resolution had no chance of escape from her pursuers; and as a successful resistance against such overwhelming odds seemed hopeless, even to the daring conqueror of Valencia, he felt it his duty to go on board the Enterprize, as the fastest sailer, taking with him the Spanish Envoy and the state papers, but, of course, being compelled to leave his gallant son to his fate. Favoured by the darkness, which soon afterwards came on, he in company with the Milford Haven escaped into Leghorn.

The Resolution was not equally fortunate; at about ten o'clock, two of the fastest sailing French ships came up with her, and, although they did not open fire, kept close by throughout the night. One by one the other pursuers, being all freshly appointed ships, just out of Toulon, also closed upon the luckless Mordaunt. At six in the morning the Frenchmen opened fire upon their single opponent, and then commenced one of the most gallant actions that even our splendid naval annals record. With consummate skill and unflinching courage, the brave young Englishman handled his clumsy ship through the iron tempest that assailed her, still pressing on under all sail to the port of shelter, to which his father and comrades had escaped, every now and then bending from his course for a moment, to pour a broadside into the foremost of his pursuers. His best efforts were however vain: by half-past three in the afternoon, the Resolution was so maimed in her hull, masts, and rigging, that it became evidently impossible that she could escape.

Mordaunt then determined to risk his own life,

14:074

and those of all on board, rather than that their ship should fall into the enemy's hands. To the astonishment of his pursuers, he suddenly changed his course, and, still fighting with every available gun, steered his ship right ashore. The French continued to advance cautiously, as near as they might venture to the dangerous shallows; but they soon found that their distant fire was powerless to dislodge those gallant men, who had for hours resisted them in close action. Just before nightfall, all the boats of the French fleet were sent to carry the stranded ship; they attacked with all the usual courage of their nation, but met with a bloody repulse.

On the morning of the 21st, a French eighty-gun ship was skilfully worked in close to the Resolution, and prepared to open fire. At last Mordaunt saw that further resistance would be unjustifiable: his ship was half filled with water, her powder all damaged, and her crew frightfully diminished in numbers, and utterly exhausted by the protracted and unequal combat. But even then he made the necessary arrangements with

coolness and judgment. All the wounded, the whole of the crew, the flags, papers, and everything of value, were placed in the boats, and the vessel was then fired so effectually, that by 11 o'clock she was burnt to the water's edge. Almost at the last moment, while leaving the ship, Mordaunt was struck in the leg by a cannon ball; he still, however, retained the command, and all the boats reached the shore in safety.

After these events Peterborough made his way to Turin, where he remained some time, but Spain was still in his thoughts, and he made yet another effort to prevent the rash resolve of the Allies from being carried into effect. The Portuguese Ambassador at the Court of Charles had always shown a deference to Peterborough's opinion and abilities; through him, therefore, the Earl made his last appeal, in a letter written from Turin on the 21st of April.

"My Lord,

"I assure you I am with a particular inclination your servant. I look upon you as my friend and companion in all the miseries and mortifications of the

Spanish war. * * * * Would to God you were free from uneasiness, when I hope to be in quiet! It seems to me as if storms were threatening Spain, and I am the more concerned because of the probability of your generals' continuing in a disposition to rash measures. It is certain they are only in a condition for a defensive war; and that suffices for the public, since the preparations against France are so terrible in Italy and in Flanders. * * * But, my Lord, pray consider the consequences of a lost battle in the spring. * * * I know my reasons though good will have little force with the generals: they have the last campaign in their thoughts, and have not perhaps the same tranquillity of mind and quiet which, I thank God! enjoy; being well content with the beginnings I have made, only wishing a happy conclusion to this great affair. * * * I therefore entreat your Excellency to think again of the consequences of a lost battle. God be praised we are not in a necessity for a victory: that is the circumstance of France. * * * My thoughts were to defend the entrance into Valencia with 2000 horse and 8000 foot, which were easy with less force, and with 11,000 foot and 5000 horse to have gained the head of the Tagus by a stolen march. We might have had as many Arragonese as we could desire; who for the mountains, and defending the passage

over that river, would have equalled our best troops. * * * At present, I have nothing to propose to your Excellency, nor to wish, but that the troops might not be fatigued: in the impossible views of gaining Madrid, half the army would be exposed to destruction, by diseases and famine, or the whole in a very improper time by an unequal battle. * * * I will neglect nothing in my power to obtain, in a favourable opportunity, a succour of troops for Spain, that in the after season we may push our affairs. I desire you to assure the King of my inviolable attachment to his interest, which nothing can diminish."

Peterborough met with much kindness and consideration at Turin, and would gladly have remained as a volunteer with the Duke of Savoy, or his friend the admiral, Sir Cloudesley Shovel, but his recall was repeated with great importunity. He accordingly set out for England through Germany, being obliged to leave behind him in Italy his second son, the gallant commander of the Resolution, who had not yet recovered from his severe wounds. Peterborough's health had been injured by over-exertion in the late campaigns, and now that the

excitement which supported his meagre frame had ceased, he suffered much from indisposition. On this account, and being also in no hurry to obey his peremptory summons, he travelled at his leisure across the Continent, visiting the camp of his illustrious namesake, Charles, King of Sweden, in Saxony.*

Peterborough then proceeded, by special and pressing invitation from the Duke of Marlborough, to the British camp at Gemappe, where he arrived early in August. At this time, however, there was but little real cordiality between these two great captains, although the Duke kept up all the outward semblance of friendship. He writes to Count Maffei in a strain by no means complimentary to Peterborough, and rather giving warning against him as indiscreet and dangerous, almost at the same time that he proffers the hospitalities of the camp to the Earl, and communicates in terms of kindly intimacy with Lady Peterborough. On the 20th of August, 1707, Peterborough arrived in England. "I have overcome all my

* See Appendix, pp. 22, 23.

enemies except lies," said he, "and those I have papers enough with me to defeat."

In a general review of the events of his Spanish campaign, one cannot but be struck by the strange varieties of character which Peterborough's actions display. Even in his wisest and widest plans there was sure to be a tinge of unsoundness of mind. His greatest successes were gained by means which hardly any sane man would have attempted, and of which many other conscientious men would have held that they were unjustifiable even in war itself. Regardless though he was of personal danger, he valued much more highly that artifice which had baffled the enemy, without the shedding of one drop of blood, than the mere triumphs of the stronger sword. While at times his plans bore the appearance of inexcusable temerity, they were arranged with the calculations of profound prudence. Ever ready to adventure risk when adequate advantage offered, his caution under unfavourable circumstances was held by his opponents to savour almost of timidity. But the

rarest of all contrasts which he presented was, a power of the largest combination, and a far-seeing political sagacity, united with the most minute and laborious attention to the details necessary for carrying out his plans. While he considered the movements of armies, and the dispositions of kingdoms, no bolder captain ever rode at the head of a single troop of horse, and no more active partisan ever haunted an enemy through the mountainous wilds of Spain. Full of wisdom and of folly, actuated, almost at the same moment, by noble impulse and by petulant jealousy; lavishing his fortune and risking his life in the service of his country, and yet incapable of sacrificing his personal vanity for her dearest interests; reckless in morals while hating the mean vices of others; sceptic in religion while paying politic respect to the creed which of all creeds he most despised; few men have ever united so much of the great and of the little, of transcendant ability and of lamentable weakness. His was a powerful intellect without the guide of reason, a generous heart without the guide of principle.

CHAP. XVI.

Soon after Peterborough's arrival in England, he was much impressed by the singular end of a first cousin, Philip Mordaunt, who shared in no small degree his own gifts, and strange unsoundness of mind. This young man was then only twenty-seven years of age, rarely handsome, of a noble presence, endowed with brilliant wit, popular, admired, beloved by a woman to whom he was tenderly attached, rich in the good things of the world, illustrious by descent, and yet afflicted with a strange distaste for life. He paid his debts, he wrote to take leave of his friends, and even composed a set of verses appropriate to his purpose, concluding thus:

"L'opium peut aider le sage;
Mais, selon mon opinion,
Il lui faut au lieu d'opion
Un pistolet et du courage."

He then fulfilled his intentions of releasing

himself from the toil of life, and blew his brains out with a pistol, offering no reason for his deliberate crime, except that "my soul is tired of my body, and when one is dissatisfied with a house the best way is to go out of it." It would seem that he was disgusted with the excess of his own happiness.

During Lord Peterborough's absence in Spain, his first cousin, the divorced Duchess of Norfolk, died: she was daughter and heiress of his late uncle, to whose title he had before succeeded. The family estates, which, however, were not of any very great value, reverted to him at her death.

Peterborough's restless spirit, soon after his return to England, threw him once more into the turmoil of political warfare. He openly quarrelled with his great patron the Duke of Marlborough, and, early in February, he joined himself to the Tories, assisted by other discontented Whigs, to damage Lord Godolphin's administration, and to cramp the Duke in his Flemish campaign. They began the attack by

moving the previous question upon a vote in the House of Lords for prosecuting the war in the Low Countries. Lord Rochester and others strove to exalt the importance of Peterborough's services and of the Spanish war, as compared with those of Marlborough and the events in Flanders. They said that it "had always been usual when a great man returned from an important enterprize, he should either receive thanks, or be blamed for his conduct." Lord Halifax, on the other side, also spoke of Peterborough's great services, but held that he should not be given public and formal thanks until he had gone through the ordeal of an inquiry. The Earl next spoke himself, urging that the matter might be subjected to the most searching scrutiny. He then pressed upon the House the necessity of carrying on the war at all costs, till Charles was crowned King of Spain. "We ought to give the Queen nineteen shillings in the pound," said he, "rather than make peace on any other terms; and, if it be thought necessary, I will return myself to Spain, and serve under Lord

Galway." The Duke of Marlborough angrily answered, urging the importance of the war in Flanders: he stated, that measures had already been concerted with the Emperor to form an army of 40,000 men under the Duke of Savoy, and that it was hoped that Prince Eugene would be induced to command the Germans, who, it was proposed, were to be sent to Spain "for the assistance of King Charles." Finally, the Tory opposition, strengthened by the discontented Whigs, and the personal enemies of the Duke of Marlborough, succeeded in carrying a vote that "no peace could be safe or honourable to Her Majesty and her Allies, if Spain and the Spanish West Indies were allowed to remain in the possession of the House of Bourbon." The Queen testified her great interest in this debate by being privately present up to 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

Soon after this successful contest, Peterborough was involved in an inquiry demanded by the Earl of Charlemont, who had served under him in Spain. The complaint was, that the general had

broken up Charlemont's regiment without sufficient necessity, and that he had implied, in various ways, opinions tending to damage the subordinate's conduct and courage at the attack of Montjuich, in the year 1705. A council of general officers was assembled to determine upon these matters, and the report was, like that on inquests upon the bodies of railway sufferers, in the present day, viz., "that nobody was to blame." The real case was, that Lord Charlemont had not favourably distinguished himself at the attack on Montjuich, and that Peterborough had, in consequence, annoyed him by all means in his power, lawful and unlawful, ever afterwards.

At this time public opinion in England ran strongly in Peterborough's favour; his strange and brilliant career dazzled the multitude, and his general acquaintance among men of letters called many pens into his service. Various pamphlets were written in his praise, among others, one quaintly entitled "Impartial Remarks upon the Earl of Peterborough's conduct in Spain," in which he is lauded in a style which

rather endangers the validity of the writer's claim to impartiality, although it cannot be denied that the praise was, for the most part, well deserved. "As Cicero," says the eulogist, "reports, to the eternal honour of Cæsar, that, in all his commands of the field, there was not found an *ite*, but a *veni*, as if he scorned in all his onsets to be anything but still as a leader; so you will find that his lordship always taught by the strongest authority, his own forwardness, his own examples." Again, he continues, in the same strain: "He showed, by all his faithful actions abroad, that he held it much more desirable to live a beggar than a traitor; and that his conscience should expose him to tyranny and violence, than his hypocrisy carry out his temporal felicity: nor was he ever so absolute a statesman as to call rebellion reformation, for fear of poverty or an ax." Further on we read: "Yet so unparalleled was the bravery, courage, and valour of the Earl of Peterborough in this memorable siege (Barcelona), that the dangers he exposed his person to, were not inferior to the most eminent perils of those

eternized generals and commanders, Alexander, Scipio, and Hannibal, * * * His indefatigable pains bestowed on that siege proved his lordship's abhorrence of nourishing softness, or any of the arts and blandishments of self-preservation." Towards the conclusion, we find the following notice of the attacks made by some of Peterborough's enemies: "And though his lordship is of too heroic a mind to observe petty wrongs, yet I hope his eminently known prudence will be aware of private enemies, who, like crocodiles, slime the ways of them they hate, to make them fall, and when they are down, insidiate their entrapped, and with their warmest blood fatten their moulting envy."

Even the pulpit sounded the praises of the successful general: in a sermon preached by George Stanhope, Dean of Canterbury, before the Queen, at St. Paul's, and afterwards published by Her Majesty's orders, he is thus lauded: "Then did his auspicious influence shine out more brightly upon the confederate arms, under the command of a *genius* peculiarly adapted to

such an undertaking. His activity, and vigour, and noble fire pressed on apace, and quickly rendered him a sanctuary to the friends, and a terror to the enemies, of his cause. To these, we in a great measure owe the swift reduction first, and afterwards the seasonable relief, of a city to whose fate that of the Spanish monarchy was thought so closely allied: that prize, so honourably disputed (together with the impressions made in other provinces of that kingdom, by a commander of unquestionable gallantry and zeal), is now, we hope, a firm establishment of glory and dominion to him whose royal presence was both its honour and its preservation."

Such was the style of panegyric, literary and ecclesiastical, that rewarded the heroes of the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Some of the compliments to which he was subjected were too much even for Peterborough's vanity: Pope relates, that once when a person was praising the Earl's courage to his face, in an extravagant manner, he answered, "Sir, show me a danger that I think an imminent and real one,

and I'll promise you I'll be as much afraid as any of you." Perhaps the following quaint doggrel, written to his glorification by his friend Swift, pleased him more than any other praises: —

"Mordanto fills the trump of fame,
The christian world his deeds proclaim,
And prints are crowded with his name.

"In journies he outrides the post,
Sits up till midnight with his host,
Talks politics, and gives the toast.

"Knows every prince in Europe's face,
Flies like a squib from place to place,
And travels not, but runs a race.

"From Paris gazette *à la main:*
'This day arrived, without his train,
Mordanto in a week from Spain!'

"A messenger comes all a-reek,
Mordanto at Madrid to seek:
He left the town above a week.

"Next day the post-boy winds his horn,
And rides through Dover in the morn:
'Mordanto's landed from Leghorn!'

"Mordanto gallops on alone,
The roads are with his followers strown,
This breaks a girth, and that a bone:

"His body, active as his mind,
Returning sound in limb and wind,
Except some leather lost behind.

"A skeleton in outward figure,
His meagre corps, though full of vigour,
Would halt behind him were it bigger.

"So wonderful his expedition,
When you have not the least suspicion,
He's with you like an apparition.

"Shines in all climates like a star,
In senates bold, and fierce in war,
A land commander, and a tar.

"Heroic actions early bred in,
Ne'er to be matched in modern reading,
But by his namesake, Charles of Sweden."

On the 24th of February, 1709, Peterborough's second son, the gallant Henry Mordaunt, of the

Resolution, died of the small-pox, after a few days' illness: he was then, and had been for the two preceding Parliaments, M. P. for Malmesbury; but he appears to have devoted himself far more to his professional than to his Parliamentary career; his name never once appears among the list of speakers in the House of Commons, but he was deservedly admired and beloved by numerous friends, and left behind him a character for high gallantry and merit as a sailor, and for spotless integrity in all the relations of life. He died unmarried.

Six weeks after this affliction another followed: John Lord Mordaunt, Peterborough's eldest son, Major-general in the army, Colonel of the Scots Fusileer Guards, and M. P. for Chippenham, and subsequently for Brackley, died of the same terrible disease, and was buried in the family vault at Tarvey, leaving two sons, and his widow Frances, second daughter of Charles Powlett, Duke of Bolton. He entered the army at a very early age, and by his powerful interest, and also by his merit and conduct, rose

rapidly in his profession. He commanded the grenadiers of the First Foot Guards at the battle of Blenheim, where he particularly distinguished himself, and lost his left arm. His political and religious opinions were cast in his father's mould: being actively engaged in professional duties, he seldom took any decided part in Parliamentary business; but on the 4th of February, 1707, he attracted no small share of attention, by a short but characteristic speech on the subject of the proposed union with Scotland. Sir John Pakington, in opposing the measure, had said, "The Church of England being established 'jure divino,' and the Scots pretending that their Church is also 'jure divino,' I cannot see how two nations, clashing on such a vital point, could unite; and, therefore, I think it would be advisable to consult Convocation about this critical question." The young Lord Mordaunt answers, with contemptuous sarcasm, "I know of no other 'jure divino' than God Almighty's permission, in which sense it might be said that the Church of England and the Kirk of Scotland were both

'jure divino,' because God Almighty had permitted that the first should prevail in England, and the other in Scotland: and the honourable member who spoke last may, if he think fit, consult Convocation for his own particular instruction; but it would be derogatory to the Commons of England, to advise on this occasion with an inferior assembly, who have no share in the legislature."

In the year 1708, his imperious and fiery spirit led him into a serious difficulty with the magistracy of the city of York, while quartered there with his regiment. He claimed and exacted privileges beyond the powers vested in him by law, as the officer commanding the troops; a complaint was lodged against him, both with the Duke of Marlborough and the Queen; and Mr. Secretary Boyle was directed to express Her Majesty's "high displeasure" at his conduct to the justices, and his unwarrantable assumption of power. His own and his father's services were, however, far too eminent to be long obscured by this indiscretion; and he was soon afterwards

appointed to the command of the Scots Fusileer Guards, by the orders of the Great Duke.

Certain similarities in character and temper made this impetuous and gallant young man his father's favourite. The Earl often passed the brief intervals of quiet which his incessant activity permitted him, at Lord Mordaunt's house in Yorkshire; but a strange jealousy of the presence of any one who might be a restraint upon his actions, prevented him from wishing that his son should share with him the perils and glories of his Spanish campaign.

In a poem of extravagant laudation of Peterborough, by James Oldmixon, called Iberia Liberata, published in 1706, the son comes in for a share of the poet's not very poetic praise: —

"Early he fought for liberty and Anne,
And grew a hero sooner than a man:
If in his dawn his glory shines so bright,
What eyes will bear his full meridian light
When his great father's mighty acts enflame
His spirit in the burning chace of fame?"

Lady Peterborough is also introduced by the

same partial bard, who seems to have appreciated her merits more than her celebrated husband, for he rarely alludes to her in his correspondence, and she never accompanied him in any of his numerous journeyings. She was on terms of intimacy with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and kept up that important friendship even after the decided manifestations of animosity on the part of her lord against the great victor of Blenheim. Oldmixon thus describes her: —

"Beauty and wit and every charming grace,
Which brightens and adorns the mind and face,
The power creating has in you exprest.

* * * *

"Beauty is wit's, and wit is beauty's friend:
But when with virtue, as in you, they shine,
The transport is eternal and divine."

A singular fatality crowded into a brief space the sum of Peterborough's domestic afflictions: on the 13th of May, 1709, within a very short time of the death of both his sons, Lady Peterborough, whom the obituary describes as "a lady of admirable wit and judgment," died of a

"squinzy" and was laid beside her first-born and favourite son, in the family vault at Tarvey. Thus, in about his fiftieth year, was this strange being left almost alone in the world; all the ties of affection, which had, it must be confessed, sat but lightly upon him, were severed and gone. He had, without doubt, still many supporters and admirers, but very few friends; his imperious and jealous temper had turned the almost affectionate regard of Stanhope, and the active patronage of Marlborough, into hatred and suspicion. Despite his brilliant services, the influence he still retained proceeded more from a dread of his powers of mischief, than from any confidence in his inclination to be useful. But, amidst this general mistrust, no one ventured openly to disoblige him; and even the great Marlborough limited his hostility against him to a withdrawal of support, and an occasional sneer in correspondence with others.

These sneers were, however, more than amply revenged: Peterborough never lost an opportunity of alluding to the enormous rewards received by the Great Duke, and his inordinate love of money.

One day he chanced to be mistaken by the mob for Marlborough, then in the height of unpopularity: they pursued him with ferocious threats, and such demonstrations of rage as showed that his danger was imminent. His self-possession never for a moment forsook him; he rejoiced in the savage cries that were intended for his enemy, although they portended his own immediate peril. "Gentlemen," said he, "I have two means of convincing you that I am not the Duke of Marlborough: firstly, I have now only five guineas in my pocket, and, secondly, they are at your service." He then threw the gold among the people, and rode coolly away, followed by their deafening acclamations of applause.

In March, 1709, Peterborough found opportunity for signalising his hostility to the ministry by actively opposing a bill brought into the House of Lords "for improving the Union" (with Scotland), as an insidious attempt on the part of the government to obtain additional powers in cases which they might think proper to call treasonable. He detected the object of the clauses which would

have conferred these stringent powers, and endeavoured, but vainly, to baffle it. The bill passed however by a large majority, and Peterborough had only the barren resource of recording a protest against it.



CHAP. XVII.

We would now return to take a glance at the general progress of the war to which Peterborough had devoted himself with such hearty zeal and brilliant success.

First, as to Spain. The stubborn loyalty of the Castilians to their Bourbon king, survived the darkest hour of his fortunes. The people loved him not so much for his own merits, as because he was the sovereign of their choice. The lofty intrepidity of his Queen, the Duke of Savoy's daughter, excited their utmost enthusiasm. She went alone from city to city arousing the pride of Spain, and throwing herself upon the generosity of her subjects. Contributions poured in apace; numbers of the peasantry flocked to the royal standard, and, to their honour be it spoken, not one of the nobles who

had sworn allegiance to the Bourbons failed in his fidelity.

The English and Portuguese armies, unsupported in this storm of popular hostility, were beaten piecemeal. Their supplies were stopped, their detachments were cut off, and they were left in utter darkness as to the movements and forces of the enemy.

Meanwhile Louis XIV. spared no efforts to assist the gallant people who were striving so nobly to assist themselves. Although his gigantic resources were taxed almost beyond their capacity to make head to the north and east against the conquering arms of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, and the successes of the Duke of Savoy, he yet managed to send a reinforcement to the French army under the Duke of Berwick in Castile. This timely aid speedily enabled the Duke to prove the value of Peterborough's counsel in favour of defensive war: he succeeded in bringing on a general engagement with the English and Portuguese under Lord Galway and Das Minas, at Almanza, and on the 14th of

April, 1707, inflicted on the British arms one of those few but terrible reverses that speck the glory of our military annals. The rout began with the Portuguese troops on the right, who hardly waited to receive the first onset: the English fought with characteristic obstinacy, but, deserted by their worthless allies, they were overmatched and utterly defeated. They sustained a fearful loss in slain, all their colours and artillery were taken, and nearly 10,000 men of the allied army were made prisoners by the French. Neither of the rival kings was present at this bloody and decisive battle for the crown. Upon hearing this Peterborough said with republican bitterness, "What simpletons we must be to fight for such creatures!" and he added, "Slaves may fight for a man; freemen should fight only for a nation."

The day after his brilliant victory the Duke of Berwick was superseded in the command by the arrival of the Duke of Orleans, who was commissioned to conduct the war in Spain. He pressed with vigour the advantages of his pre-

decessor; he took Lerida and other important strongholds in rapid succession. But an unexpected motive for his activity soon afterwards came to light. When the capricious tide of success again turned against the cause of Philip in Spain, while Louis XIV., paralysed by the shock of Marlborough's victories, was unable to render assistance to his grandson, the Duke of Orleans secretly laboured to induce Philip to abdicate, and abandon the apparently hopeless contest, and the Spaniards to nominate him as the successor to the vacant throne. Early in 1710 this intrigue was discovered, and although generally reprobated by the French people, it was regarded, if not favourably, at least with indifference, by the French King.

In the latter part of the same year the arrival of the Duke de Vendôme again changed the fate of Spain; General Stanhope, with the main body of the English army, reduced to hardly 2000 men, was forced to surrender at Brihuega, after a stubborn combat; and the German general, Staremberg, was so severely handled at Villa

Viciosa, that, although claiming a victory, he was forced to abandon some captured artillery, and to retire into Catalonia. These successes again established Philip in Madrid, and the Spanish monarchy thus passed finally into the hands of the Bourbons.

This termination of the contest was, however, far from being the mere result of Vendôme's success, and Stanhope's and Staremberg's reverses. Events of far greater importance had meanwhile occurred elsewhere. The Queen of England had quarrelled with her imperious favourite, the Duchess of Marlborough, and had consequently withdrawn her favour from the great Duke and the cause of war, with which he was identified. The Tories took advantage of this opportunity, and, by means of a new favourite, Mrs. Masham, managed to establish themselves completely in the royal favour. But the Queen, though now desirous of peace, did not venture to remove from the command of her armies, in the midst of his splendid successes, the most powerful subject in Europe. She,

however, made considerable modifications in the ministry; the Duke's son-in-law, Sunderland, was removed from his post as Secretary of State, and a private agent of the French King was covertly received at Court with propositions of peace. The new ministry were yet unwilling or afraid to make any public avowal of their pacific intentions, for decisive majorities in both Houses of Parliament were determined to humble still further the power of France, despite the alteration in the royal feelings on the subject.

During these shiftings of the political scenery, considerable excitement was caused in courtly circles by the publication of Mrs. Manby's libellous book, "the New Atlantis," perhaps one of the most infamous productions that ever disgraced a woman's pen: in this Mrs. Masham, Mr. Harley, and Lord Peterborough were the favoured characters, and were as much lauded as the Whig leaders were abused. So immoral and malignant was this libel, that the writer was prosecuted, convicted, and suffered a long imprisonment. Two years afterwards, when

those she had praised were established in power, and those she had libelled were in disgrace, she applied through Peterborough for some consideration for her former services to the successful party.

Peterborough was a person of too much importance to remain unnoticed in the new ministerial arrangements. Mr. Harley, in his sketch of the plan of administration, says, "In the House of Lords, where the (Whig) faction have most of their strength and most of their able men, they will attempt to unite themselves at the first by some vote; therefore no time should be lost in securing those who are to be had, before they are so far engaged the other way,—such as Lord Peterborough," &c. Harley was right in his estimate that the eccentric Earl was "to be had," at least negatively. His hatred to Marlborough had already half reconciled him to the ministry which had interrupted the Duke's career of conquest, and displaced his two sons-in-law from office.

Towards the close of 1710 Peterborough be-

came on friendly, if not intimate, terms with St. John and Harley; at the house of the latter Swift records that he foretold his enemy Stanhope's disaster, which was so soon verified. "He will lose Spain before Christmas," was the spiteful but accurate prophecy. At this time Peterborough mixed constantly in the society of men of genius and learning, as well as in that of political leaders. Prior, Lewis, Gay, the learned Dr. Friend, and above all Swift himself, were his frequent companions. With these kindred spirits he gave vent to the current of his eccentric nature, and, from the snatches of information that can be gleaned from their writings, he rejoiced in a sort of equality with them which his rank alone could not have given him. After a jovial supper at Peterborough's house, at which most of the leading wits of the day were present, Swift describes him, with a sort of caressing censure, as "the ramblingest lying rogue on earth."

In December, St. John found an opportunity of disposing of his new political ally. Peterborough was appointed to go to Vienna, to

endeavour to adjust those differences between the Emperor and the Duke of Savoy, which had been the cause of so many inactive campaigns on the side of Italy; and to concert measures for carrying on the war in Spain with more vigour. He had also orders to stop at the Hague on the way, to communicate his instructions to the States General. This commission was, however, given with the sole purpose of a retainer for political support, or rather to prevent political opposition, for no real powers were placed in his hands; and at the very time when he was sent, as a spirit of evil, to urge on more energetic war, the Tory ministry were secretly engaged in the preliminaries of a general peace. Peterborough was highly gratified by his appointment, and prepared to perform its duties with inconvenient zeal. A few days after he had received it, he met his friend Swift in the street, called him into a barber's shop, and immediately plunged deeply into European politics; but both being hurried away by calls elsewhere, he insisted upon the Dean's dining with him the next day at "the Globe," in the

Strand, where he promised to explain beyond all doubt, how Spain might be conquered. Swift went accordingly at the time appointed, and found him among "half-a-dozen lawyers and attornies, and hang-dogs, signing deeds and stuff," before his journey: he stated that he was going the next day to Vienna. Swift sat "among that scurvy company" till after four, but heard nothing of Spain, the conversation being all about the journey to Vienna, where Peterborough professed to think he could be of but little use.

His friend, however, estimated his probable services more highly, and concludes the first letter, written to him after his departure from England:—"My Lord, the Queen knew what she did when she sent your Lordship to spur up a dull northern Court: yet, I confess, I had rather have seen that activity of mind and body employed in conquering another kingdom, or the same over again."

The want of any public acknowledgment of his services had long embittered Peterborough against the leaders of his own political party, who, he

conceived, had allowed his achievements to be overshadowed by the glories of their great chief, Marlborough. He earnestly desired an opportunity for the discussion of his conduct in Spain by the House of Lords; this opportunity his new political allies speedily provided for him. On the motion of the Duke of Beaufort, an application was made to the Queen to delay Peterborough's departure for Vienna for some days, that he might furnish information upon the affairs of Spain. Accordingly, he recalled his servants and baggage from Greenwich, where they had been sent for embarkation, and on the 5th attended in his place in Parliament. The Lords resolved themselves into a committee of the whole House, and the Earl of Abingdon, as chairman, put five questions to him, to which he returned distinct answers. Lords Galway and Tyrawley (Sir Charles O'Hara) were permitted also to attend, and were examined: the former being allowed a place within the bar, on account of his great personal infirmities; he answered the questions put to him as well as his imperfect

knowledge of the English language permitted, and obtained leave to state his case in writing, in the form of a narrative.

When these Lords withdrew, the discussion assumed the form of a censure upon Lord Galway; but Godolphin, Halifax, and Marlborough spoke strongly in his favour. "It is somewhat strange," said the Duke, "that generals who have acted to the best of their understanding, and have lost limbs in the service, should be examined like offenders about insignificant things."

On the 9th, the subject was resumed. The debate created deep interest. The Queen was privately present up to a late hour. On this occasion, to the bitterness of party feeling was added that of personal enmity, and military rivalry. To censure Lord Galway was to express approval of Peterborough's counsels, and to laud Peterborough was to wound the great Duke, who had thrown his political shield over Lord Galway.

On the motion of the Earl of Scarborough,

a Committee of the whole House was again formed, Lord Abingdon chairman. After some delay for the arrival of the Queen, Peterborough opened this memorable debate by moving that a statement, which he had prepared in the shape of answers to the five questions put to him on the former occasion, should be received by the Committee, as well as the narrative of Lord Galway; and that Lord Galway and Lord Tyrawley should be summoned and questioned: "I only seek my own defence," he added, "I accuse no one." The narrative was then read, which stated that Lord Galway had offered the command to Peterborough, after his junction with the allied army, which was refused, because the Portuguese general, Das Minas, did not make the same offer; and that the Earl thereupon left the camp, after having returned from Italy; and that Peterborough demanded 5000 men for an expedition to Catalonia, which Galway refused.

Peterborough's statement was next produced; it was, in fact, a strong accusation against Galway,

despite the previous disclaimer. "He thwarted me," said the Earl, "and he has been a powerful cause of disasters." He continued at considerable length, and with great animation, running over the story of his actions, and of his opinions at the council of war, and ended with the boast that "no party of twenty men under my command was ever beaten, and no ship was ever lost." At the close of the debate, the Earl Ferrers moved a resolution that "the Earl of Peterborough has given a very faithful, just, and honourable account of this council of war in Valencia." The vote passed by the narrow majority of fifty-seven to forty-five.

On the 11th, the subject was resumed. Peterborough spoke first: "Having the Queen's orders to leave, I hope your Lordships will give me an opportunity of clearing some heads that have been made against me by the Secretary of State. My going out of Spain for Italy, was to concert measures for the siege of Toulon, according to my instructions; being empowered to treat and negotiate with the Duke of Savoy, particularly

about that siege, of which I have already given an account in writing. I had several conferences with the Duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene. But, though acting according to my instructions, I was recalled by the Earl of Sunderland, in a letter dated 23rd of September, 1706, for negotiating matters of so high a nature, without the Queen's authority." He then proceeded to explain the plan which he had formed: "I proposed to get 5000 men from Lord Galway, to assist in the siege of Toulon, and that he should act defensively. I returned to Spain from Turin for this purpose. Lord Galway refused these men; he refused to act defensively, and he lost the battle of Almanza."

The following day the debate continued. Lords Godolphin and Cowper warmly opposed Peterborough, and endeavoured to explain that there was some difference in the instructions which had been sent him by the Cabinet Council and the Privy Council. "I have heard a distinction," replied the Earl, "between the Cabinet Council and the Privy Council: that the Privy Counsellors were such as were thought to know

everything, and knew nothing, and those of the Cabinet thought nobody knew anything but themselves; and the same distinction may in a great measure hold as to Ministers and Cabinet Council. The word Cabinet Council is indeed too copious, for they dispose of all: they finger the money: they meddle with the war: they meddle with things they do not understand, so that sometimes there is no Minister in the Cabinet Council."

Lord Cowper replied, "I advocated an offensive war with the best intentions to serve my country." Peterborough retorted with sarcastic wit: "One would be apt to think the ministry were indeed for a defensive war, when they suffered me to want men, money, and all necessaries; and though I had instructions to treat about the siege of Toulon, I had letters of revocation sent to me of a sudden, which however I sent back unopened. When I came home, I was coldly received and disregarded; but I preserved myself not only by my integrity and little services, but also by caution and patience." And so the debate pro-

ceeded. Nearly every name of note among the Peers of England is found as having taken a part for or against Peterborough: Marlborough with cold dislike, the Earl Poulett with friendly earnestness. The Dukes of Devonshire and Shrewsbury joined issue with sharp recrimination; the Earls of Nottingham and Rivers with ponderous explanations and opposing views; the profligate but gifted Lord Mohun with powerful advocacy for the kindred spirit; and many others, for and against. A motion strongly condemning the conduct of the late Ministers in having advised an offensive war in Spain, was finally carried by sixty-eight to forty-eight.

Peterborough's conduct having thus received this negative approval, the Duke of Argyle moved a compliment to him in a highly eulogistic speech; and the Duke of Buckingham afterwards moved that a formal vote of thanks should be presented: both motions were carried unanimously.

The Lord Keeper accordingly conveyed to Peterborough the formal thanks of the House, prefacing them with these flattering words: —

"My Lord, the thanks of this illustrious assembly is an honour which has been rarely paid to any subject, but never after a stricter enquiry into the nature of any service, upon a more mature deliberation, or with greater justice, than at this time to your Lordship. Such is your Lordship's known generosity, and truly noble temper, that I assure myself the present I am now offering to your Lordship is the more acceptable, as it comes pure and unmixed, and is unattended by any other reward, which your Lordship might think would be an alloy to it." This allusion to Peterborough's disinterestedness was full of venom against the enormously endowed Duke of Marlborough.

"My Lord, had more days been allowed to me than I have had minutes, to call to mind the wonderful and amazing success which perpetually attended your Lordship in Spain, (the effect of your Lordship's personal bravery and conduct,) I would not attempt the enumerating your particular services, since I should offend your Lordship by the mention of such as I could

recollect, and give a just occasion of offence to this honourable House, by my involuntary omission of the far greater part of them."

To these magniloquent compliments Peterborough replied:—"My Lords. For the great honour and favour I have received from your Lordships, I return my most humble thanks, with a heart full of the greatest respect and gratitude. No services can deserve such a reward; it is more than a sufficient recompense for any past hardships, and to which nothing can give an addition. I cannot reproach myself with any want of zeal for the public service; but your Lordships' approbation of what I was able to do, towards serving my Queen and country, gives me new life; and I shall endeavour, in all my future actions, not to appear unworthy of the unmerited favour I have received to-day, from this great assembly."

CHAP. XVIII.

WITH characteristic rapidity, Peterborough started for Vienna early on the morning following this debate; he had gained one high object of his ambition, and at the same time assisted in an annoyance, if not an insult, to the great Duke, whom he hated for having eclipsed the minor star of his glory. He hastened on with a vehemence more suited to his own temperament, than to the real importance of his duties. He made a short stay at the Hague, where he had been directed to explain the nature of his mission, and then pushed on to Vienna.

He wrote the following letter from thence in August, from which it would appear that he was neither contented with the state of things at home, nor with the nature of his own duties.

For the Rev. Dr. Swift, Bishop of, or Dean of, &c.

"Sir,

"I have often with pleasure reflected upon the glorious possibilities of the English constitution: but, must I apply to politics a French expression, appropriated by them to beauty, there is a (je ne scai quoi) amongst us, which makes us troublesome with our learning, disagreeable with our wit, poor with our wealth, and insignificant with our power.

"I could never despise any body for what they have not, and am only provoked when they make not the right use of what they have. This is the greatest mortification, to know the advantages we have by art and nature, and see them disappointed by self-conceit and faction.

"I have with great uneasiness received imperfect accounts of disagreements amongst ourselves. The party we have to struggle with, has strength enough to require our united endeavours. We should not attack their firm body like hussars. Let the victory be secure before we quarrel for the spoils: let it be considered whether their yoke be easy, or their burthen light. What! must there ever be in St. Stephen's Chapel a majority either of knaves or fools?

"But, seriously, I have long apprehended the effects of that universal corruption, which has been improved

with so much care, and has so fitted us for the tyranny designed, that we are grown, I fear, insensible of slavery, and almost unworthy of liberty.

"The gentlemen, who give you no other satisfaction in politics than the appearances of ease and mirth, I wish I could partake with them in their good humour; but Tokay itself has no effect upon me while I see affairs so unsettled; faction so strong and credit so weak; and all services abroad under the truest difficulties by past miscarriages, and present want of money: but we are told here, that in the midst of victory, orders are given to sound a parley, I will not say a retreat.

"I have rid the resty horse you say they gave me, in ploughed lands, till I have made him tame. I wish they manage the dull jades as well at home, and get them forward either with whip or spur. I depend much upon the three you mention; if they remember me with kindness, I am theirs by the two strongest ties, I love them and hate their enemies.

"Yet you seem to wish me other work. It is time the statesmen employ me in my own trade, not theirs. If they have nothing else for me to subdue, let me command against this rank whiggish puppet-show. Those junto pygmies, if not destroyed, will grow up to giants. Tell St. John he must find me work in the old world or the new.

"I find Mr. Harley forgets to make mention of the most important part of my letter to him; which was to let him know, that I expected immediately, for one Dr. Swift, a lean bishopric or a fat deanery. If you happen to meet that gentleman at dinner, tell him that he has a friend out of the way of doing him good, but that he would, if he could, whose name is —

PETERBOROUGH."

The fatal differences between the Emperor and the Duke of Savoy having in a great measure obstructed the operations of the war on the side of Piedmont for the two preceding campaigns, Peterborough left no means untried to promote a better understanding between them. He strongly urged certain concessions from the Emperor to the Duke of Savoy, which might stimulate the activity of the latter: great difficulties were interposed by the Austrian ministers, and it was not until a few days before the Emperor was seized with his fatal illness that some only of the courted concessions were obtained. Peterborough then started in hot haste for Turin; he made the most of the promises he had obtained at Vienna, and,

to the dismay of the English ministry, promised a great deal more on his own account. By these questionable means he succeeded in setting the Duke of Savoy in motion: the Duke put himself at the head of his own troops and the auxiliaries of the Empire, forced his way into his duchy of Savoy, and penetrated as far as the Rhone, making an important diversion of the French forces.

Having spurred on the war in this direction, Peterborough then proceeded at his usual pace to Genoa, to meet and confer with his friend the Duke of Argyle, who had now succeeded to the command in Spain. He there made arrangements to go on to Barcelona, and advise in the conduct of the Catalonian war, and at the same time to induce the Archduke Charles to hasten to Vienna and watch over his own interests in the existing crisis.

However, the prosecution of these plans was interrupted by Peterborough quarrelling with the Duke of Argyle; he suddenly gave up his intention of interfering in Spain, and posted back

to Turin in the same frantic haste in which he had left it a few days before. He arrived on the 27th of May, left it again on the 31st, pressed on with incredible speed to Vienna, where he found despatches from home of by no means a complimentary character. After three days' stay he started for England, lighting for a moment, like an evil vision, at Hanover and at the Hague, landed near Yarmouth on the 23rd of June, and the next morning was at the residence of Comte Maffée, the envoy of the Duke of Savoy in London: in the evening he rendered account of his embassy to the Queen in person at Kensington Palace.

His friend Swift gives the following quaint sketch of his journey: —"Lord Peterborough is returned from Vienna without one servant. He left them scattered in several towns in Germany I had a letter from him four days ago from Hanover, where he desires I would immediately send him an answer to his house at Parson's Green. I wondered what he meant till I heard he was come. He sent expresses and got here

before them. He is above fifty, and as active as one of twenty-five."

As soon as he returned, Peterborough renewed his intimacy with Swift, with whom he had corresponded during his absence, and from whom he had received valuable information as to the progress of events at home. It was Mr. Harley's custom every Saturday to have four or five of his most intimate friends to dinner; among these were Swift and Peterborough, when in England, and here after dinner they used to discuss and arrange matters of great importance: through this means Swift was enabled to give his friend an early hint as to the more peaceable intentions of the Ministry. On the other hand, the witty Dean valued his eccentric friend's letters very highly: "He (Peterborough) writes so well that I have no mind to answer him, and so kind that I must answer him." This answering was no easy matter, for Swift echoes that complaint of the Harley ministry, in having to write "at him" and not "to him," as it was never known where a letter might catch him.

During this short sojourn in England, Peterborough met with a severe accident, from being upset in his coach, on one of his rapid journeys, which injury caused him to spit blood, and for several days endangered his life. But he "outrode it or outdrank it," and did not allow it to interfere for a moment with his subsequent journey to Frankfort, although even then so ill, that the announcement of his death was expected by every post.

Her Majesty had received Peterborough graciously, but the ministry were full of complaints against their insubordinate envoy. He had gone counter to his instructions in every possible point. He had been directed on no account to leave Vienna (probably because it was thought that there he could do least mischief); and he was especially cautioned against committing himself to the demands of the Duke of Savoy.

St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, writes to the Duke of Marlborough with bitterness of these acts of disobedience, that Peterborough's "head was extremely hot and confused with various

undigested schemes." He sneers at the vastness of this independent envoy's projects: "Lord Peterborough's projects are vast, and suppose nothing less than the restoring of all the troops, which belong to the Spanish war, to their established number of 52,000 men, besides taking 5000 Swiss and 8000 Imperialists into the Queen's pay: you know, my Lord (the Duke of Marlborough), how little able we are to enter into such an increase of charge, and will therefore easily believe that these papers are already grown dusty on the office shelves," (alluding to Peterborough's despatches).

Meanwhile, on the 20th of April, an event had occurred which determined the fatal "War of the Succession," and shortly restored to Europe the blessings of peace. The Emperor Joseph died of the small-pox, and his brother Charles succeeded him as Emperor of Austria, and became the probable successor to the German Empire. This immediately changed the aspect of affairs, as regarded England and Holland. They who had been the life and sinew of the coalition, and

who had lavished their blood and treasure to prevent the overgrowth of one royal family, would no longer sustain the struggle, when their victory would now but cause a still greater disturbance of the balance of power. They could not desire to join to the vast resources of the Empire, the shattered, but still gigantic, strength of the Spanish monarchy. The news of the Emperor's death caused a revulsion of feeling in England, which was encouraged by the influence of the Tory ministry: the object for which they had fought no longer existed; success would now prove a positive evil; the expenses of the profitless contest had grown to an amount enormous in those days. The nation wearied of her costly glories, and the capricious current of popular favour ran strongly against her matchless general.

The Harley ministry, however, deemed it inexpedient as yet publicly to break up the great Alliance, which had humbled the power of France; but negotiations, scarcely rising above the dignity of intrigue, were privately carried on, with a view to an accommodation. Meanwhile, the

sword of Marlborough was still active, and now threatening the very frontier of France. Even the genius of Marshal de Villars failed before it; the great Duke forced the lines of Valenciennes, and, by the daring capture of Bouchaine, finished the campaign, and completed the sum of his military glory. Not a rampart now lay between his victorious army and the capital of Louis XIV.

Meanwhile, the electors of the Empire assembled at Frankfort, to choose a successor to Joseph. The Austrian ministers, while earnestly striving to procure the election of his brother Charles, were most perplexed, at this arduous juncture, by the sudden appearance of Peterborough among them, as Ambassador Extraordinary from the Queen of Great Britain; he, strange to say, having had sufficient influence to be again appointed by the ministry. He urged upon the congress of electors several points which he had no authority to propose, and which it was impossible for them to accept: that the Electoral Prince of Saxony should be chosen King of the Romans; and that his friend, the Duke of Savoy,

should be assured of the succession to the Spanish monarchy, in case of the Archduke Charles dying without male issue. Despite Peterborough's exertions, these delicate points were prudently waived by the congress.

There were some positive instructions sent to Peterborough at this time which, being distasteful to him, he left completely unnoticed. Queen Anne had received information that the Prince of Saxony was about to proceed to Rome and become a Roman Catholic, for the sake of marrying the archduchess. The Queen, strongly disapproving of this proposed defection from the Protestant party, sent the following orders to Peterborough at Vienna:—

"That you are to join the Prince of Saxony before his arrival in Rome, but in such a manner that your doing so may appear accidental. Endeavour to insinuate yourself into his good opinion, and use the strongest arguments for his continuing in the Protestant religion. If his doing so would endanger him, concert measures for bringing him in safety into our dominions, or those of some other Protestant prince or state. The nature of this service is such that we can

neither enjoin you to correspond with either of our Secretaries of State, or limit the time of your return. We therefore leave it entirely to your discretion and prudence to come back to Turin, when you shall judge your attendance on the prince of no further use.

"A. R."

Peterborough did act altogether upon his own discretion; and as the duty was distasteful to him, and, as he thought, unbecoming his dignity, he took no steps whatever in the matter.

Much curiosity was excited at Frankfort, on account of some private visits paid to Peterborough by Signor Albani, the Pope's Nuncio, who attended the congress incognito, to watch the interests of the Holy See. The real purport of these visits remains a secret; but it was currently reported that the Nuncio complained bitterly to the Protestant British Ambassador, of the ill-treatment he had received at the hands of the Roman Catholic electors. Peterborough was here attacked by a dangerous illness, which nearly cost him his life. Indeed, for a day or

two, his case appeared so desperate, that it was actually reported in England that he was dead.

On the 12th of October, the Archduke Charles of Austria, King of Spain, was unanimously elected King of the Romans and Emperor of Germany, under the title of Charles VI.; and a few days afterwards he was formally installed. All strangers being compelled to withdraw from Frankfort during the ceremony, Peterborough took the opportunity of visiting Prince Eugene at the Imperial camp near Spires; he, however, returned to congratulate the new Emperor, and then set off for Italy, where, as it was whispered, he was drawn by a gentle but powerful attraction.

In the latter part of the year 1711, negotiations for peace were at length openly commenced in London. The Queen sent Lord Strafford to Holland, who obtained that the Dutch should name plenipotentiaries, and receive those of France. Marlborough's victorous career was interrupted by the deprivation of all his employments; and the English contingent, now under the Duke of Ormond, was withdrawn from Prince

Eugene. A suspension of arms was proclaimed between England and France, and Dunkirk was delivered over by Lewis XIV. to Queen Anne, in earnest of his good faith. Just then his fortunes were at the very lowest ebb: Prince Eugene with a superior force still pressed on, and spread alarm even to the royal household. The Dauphin, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, and their only son, all died within a brief space, and were carried to their graves on the same day. Just then, too, the Duke de Vendôme, the conqueror of Spain, the darling of the people and the army, also died.

In this depth of calamity, Voltaire relates that Louis XIV., though then seventy years of age, when advised to retire from the magnificent palace which he had tenanted during the early glories of his reign, declared that "in case of any fresh misfortune, I will assemble the nobility of my kingdom, and die fighting at their head." Meanwhile the skill of the aged Marshal de Villars, and an error of Prince Eugene's, saved France, and forced the allied army, shattered and

dispirited, back over the frontier. The peace of Utrecht soon followed, which left England in the first place among the nations of the earth.

During all these negotiations the British ministry kept their dangerous ambassador in complete ignorance of their real views and intentions. Mr. St. John constantly wrote to him apologising for not supplying information and instructions, pleading as excuse "the uncertainty whither to send safely," in allusion to Peterborough's perpetual journeyings, and endeavouring by personal compliments to reconcile him to this withholding of confidence. Sometimes the Secretary wrote with professions of the fullest trust, but in reality confiding nothing; for example, in the beginning of 1712 —"I will give you the full state of our affairs. I write only to yourself, not as a minister, but as a friend." Then he proceeds to state circumstances which everybody knew, and continues: "I make no scruple of giving this account to your Lordship thus plainly, because I know you not to be discouraged by difficulties."

In May following, St. John, now Lord Boling-

broke, writes again, much in the same strain, in answer to Peterborough's remonstrances. "Do not doubt of my friendship, and that I and the rest of the ministry are exerting ourselves to promote your interests. You never passed through such a scene of confusion and difficulty as this last winter has afforded us. To these causes, and to others of a near resemblance, be pleased, my Lord, to attribute the state of darkness and uncertainty you complain of having been left in. The Queen has from week to week expected the moment when her affair and the great business now in agitation would require the employing you in a post worthy of your talents, and I believe agreeable to your wishes; that moment is not very far off." He then alludes to the instructions regarding the Prince of Saxony, which Peterborough had utterly neglected, in these mild terms — "a commission which I perceive you do not very much relish;" and concludes with, "no man loves you better or honours you more than I do."

A few weeks afterwards Bolingbroke writes to

him again in the same style, ending with a postscript: "I visit Parson's Green (Peterborough's house near London) very often, and have indulged myself in all those pleasures which shady walks and cool retreats inspire. There wanted nothing but the master to make me willing to continue ever there."

In the end of December, 1712, Peterborough returned to London for the purpose of opposing the accommodation with France, in such haste as again to bring on spitting of blood, having however no intention of breaking with the ministry. On arriving in London the 4th of January, he went to the house of Mr. Harley, now Lord Oxford, at seven in the evening; it being Saturday, Bolingbroke, the Duke of Ormond, several other peers, and Dean Swift, were at table when Peterborough was announced at the door. Oxford and Bolingbroke rose and went out to meet him and bring him in: when he entered the room he singled the Dean out from the goodly company for his first and most affectionate notice; he ran over, kissed him, and chid him

severely for not having written oftener. In return for this compliment Swift declares in his Journal that "I love the hang-dog dearly." The Dean also informs us that the "hang-dog" brought back with him this time the fair object of attraction which had before led him to Italy."

The ministry further conciliated Peterborough by giving him the command of the "old Oxford Regiment of Horse," now the Royal Horse Guards Blue, which had just then become vacant by the death of Lord Rivers. For a time he took no very active share in public life, partly from his personal regard for the ministry which opposed his political principles, and partly on account of a return of the spitting of blood. In April, however, he was sufficiently recovered to join in the debate on the address in answer to the Queen's speech to Parliament, in which was communicated the arrangements of the Treaty of Utrecht. The Whig party, joined by Lord Nottingham, opposed the address, which was, as usual, an expression of approval of the conduct of the ministry. Lord Peterborough, although strongly

opposed to the peace, did not speak against it, but took an opportunity of assailing the Duke of Marlborough (who was at that time absent in Germany), as having been personally interested in carrying on the war. Peterborough was led into this somewhat ungenerous onslaught, by a personal attack which was made upon him by the Duke's friend, Lord Halifax.

On the 28th of May he took part in the debate for the repeal of the Union with Scotland, brought on in the House of Lords by the motion of the Earl of Finlater. He sided with the ministry against the repeal, and spoke at considerable length with his usual quaint and characteristic wit. "It is," said he, "impossible to dissolve this Union. I have heard it compared to a marriage; according to that notion, since it is made it cannot be broke, being made by the greatest power on earth. Though sometimes there happens a difference between man and wife, yet it does not presently break the marriage; so, in the like manner, though England, who in this national marriage must be supposed to be the

husband, might in some instances have been unkind to the lady, yet she ought not presently to sue for a divorce, the rather because she has very much mended her fortunes by this match. The Union is a contract, than which nothing can be more binding."

To this the Earl of Islay answered: "If the Union had the same sanctity as marriage, which is an ordinance of God, I should be for observing it as religiously as that, but I think there is a great difference."

Peterborough replied: "I cannot tell how it could have been more solemn than it is, except you expect it should have come down from Heaven like the Ten Commandments." In conclusion he said, "The Scots can never be satisfied. They would have all the advantages of being united to England, but would pay nothing by their good will; and they have had more money from England than the value of all their estates in their own country put together." The object of the concluding sentence was purely to annoy his quondam friend the Duke of Argyle; in this he thoroughly succeeded.

Later in the year Peterborough threw himself into the stormy discussions brought on in the House of Lords by Lord Wharton moving an address to the crown, "That Her Majesty should use her utmost endeavours with the Duke of Lorraine, and with all other princes and states at amity with her, that they would not receive or suffer the Pretender to her crown to continue in any part of their dominions." This address, although made the vehicle of a bitter and sarcastic attack upon the ministry, was in itself so popular, that no one opposed it except Lord Grey and North, who, influenced by strong Jacobite feelings, started objections to the proposal: —"Where," asked he, "would you have that person reside? since most, if not all, the powers of Europe are in amity with the Queen." To this Peterborough retorted: —"As he (the Pretender) began his studies at Paris, the fittest place for him to improve himself is Rome." In a debate that soon after followed, however, Peterborough seems to have abated somewhat in his zeal for pressing the Tories to measures of

severity against the Pretender. Whether his opinions really underwent a change or no, remains uncertain; but it is quite certain that, on the 4th of August, he had the honour of being installed at Windsor, Knight Commander of the most noble Order of the Garter, and that in the November of the same year, he was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to the King of Sicily, on a mission of congratulation, and to negotiate affairs with other Italian Princes.

But the same mistrust of his discretion still continued in the minds of the ministry, as the following extract from a letter of Lord Bolingbroke to Mr. Secretary Bromley will shew: — He speaks of some additional instructions sent to the Earl, and continues: — "You will be so good as to observe to the Queen, that it is (I humbly think) more for her Majesty's service to tie his Lordship down by instructions to the points he shall meddle with, in his passage through France, than to have him at liberty to entertain the French ministers and himself with a variety of schemes, which at best would make them

imagine our councils here very uncertain, and which might perhaps start some new proposition not agreeable to the Queen, or easy to evade." Further, in speaking of the Elector of Bavaria's claims upon Sardinia, he says, "I avoided touching upon this point in my Lord Peterborough's instructions, not knowing how far the pleasure of giving kingdoms might transport his Lordship."

Peterborough took with him as chaplain and secretary on this occasion, Mr. Berkeley, afterwards the well-known Bishop. He remained a fortnight in Paris on his way, thence went to Toulon, where he took ship for Genoa, and thence he sailed to Leghorn, where he left his chaplain and the greater part of his retinue. At Leghorn he embarked in a small Maltese brig for Sicily, with only two servants. Having remained incognito in that island for a few days, he returned to Genoa, and awaited the arrival, from England, of a yacht, in which all his equipage was embarked; when it came, he proceeded again to Sicily, and made his public appearance in state.

He wrote home to Lord Oxford a flaming

account of these journeyings; the letter was sent on to Prior, who wrote back the following remarks, not very flattering to the narrator's veracity:—"Lord Peterborough is gone from Genoa in an open boat—that's one; 300 miles by sea—that's two; that he was forced ashore twenty times, by tempests and majorkeens, to lie among the rocks—that's, *how many*, my Lord Treasurer?"

In 1714, while abroad, Peterborough was made Governor of Minorca, but he never went there; the duties of the office were performed by Colonel Kane, the commandant of the troops. The Earl, however, though absent, managed to interfere; and through a worthless protégée, named La Blotière, contrived to make himself very troublesome. Kane was at length obliged to procure authority from the English Government to compel La Blotière to leave the island.

Peterborough's diplomatic mission was unattended with results to the public good, except, indeed, in the not unimportant one of preventing him from embarrassing the ministry, either by his

opposition, or his still more dangerous support, in the House of Lords. However, he was highly acceptable to the Duke of Savoy, now King of Sicily, who continued in friendship with him to the last, and on his departure presented him with a valuable watch, in token of remembrance.

On the 1st of August, 1714, Queen Anne died, and with her the hopes of the Tory party. Immediately on the arrival, in England, of her Majesty's successor, George I., the ministry was broken up, and the triumphant Whigs passed resolutions of impeachment against Lords Oxford, Bolingbroke, and others. In consequence of these changes, Peterborough was recalled from his ambassadorial employment. In the meantime, he had fully discovered the want of confidence with which he had been treated, throughout the negotiations, concerning the Peace of Utrecht; and although it had been so thoroughly deserved, he considered himself to be the most injured of men. He consequently returned to England, full of indignation against his former friends Oxford and Bolingbroke. The latter of these

ex-ministers had withdrawn himself into France, and thus avoided the storm that was about to burst upon him and his late colleagues. Peterborough, who had lingered some months on the homeward journey, met him on the road between Paris and Calais, and took this opportunity of testifying his anger, by passing him without the interchange of a word.

CHAP. XIX.

PETERBOROUGH presented himself at the court of St. James the day after his arrival in London; he, however, not only met with a cold reception, but received, through Lord Townshend, an order forbidding his reappearance at court. The Whigs were naturally much exasperated against him, as one of their own party, who had abandoned them in their utmost need, and aided the triumph of their enemies.

Strange to say, this impatient spirit remained a quiet spectator of the stirring events of 1715; the Scottish rising in favour of the Pretender; the hopeless struggle of the chivalrous Earl of Derwentwater; the attainder of the Tory ministry, and the trial of Lord Oxford. Strong as must have been his desire to plunge into the confusion, his extreme hatred of both parties prevented him from taking either side; therefore he re-

tired to his residence at Parson's Green, and sought other excitement in the society of his old associates, and, it must again be added, in dissipation and amusements, most unsuitable to his age, rank, and position. During this time, however, he made an acquaintance, which might have purified and tranquillised the turbid current of his life, had not a mean and false vanity prevented him from reaping the benefit which it offered.

On the 27th of January, 1714, Miss Anastasia Robinson first appeared as a dramatic singer, in the opera of Creso. She was about the middle height; her figure was graceful, and even elegant. Without any pretensions to beauty, there was a winning softness in her face, and a gentle modesty in her large blue eyes, which left a deep impression, where the flash of the most brilliant beauty had often, perhaps, merely dazzled for a moment. She was neither highly intellectual, nor was she gifted with remarkable wit; but her mind was well balanced, and carefully cultivated. Her manner was singularly engaging, and free from affectation; she excited admiration in many,

and enmity in none. The purity of her life defied scandal, and instead of descending to the level of stage life, her excellence of character tended to raise the tone of her calling.

Her father was a portrait painter, who had come of a good family in Leicestershire; soon after an early marriage, he went to Italy to study his art, and remained there for a considerable period, acquiring a knowledge of the language and the music of the country at the same time. His wife had died in the meanwhile, leaving an only daughter, Anastasia. He then married Miss Lane, a Roman Catholic, who bore him another daughter, and both were brought up in the Romish faith. Anastasia, as she grew up, discovered an exquisite taste for music, and a promising voice. At that time the portrait painter's industry, aided by a small annuity of his wife's, enabled him to have his daughter instructed in singing as an accomplishment: and on her return to England, she took lessons from Dr. Crofts, then an eminent teacher. The young lady added a worthy industry to her natural

gifts: she studied carefully to master her art, and, at the same time, with her father's assistance, she acquired an excellent knowledge of the Italian language.

While yet very young, untoward circumstances pushed her accomplishments into practical use; the prosperous portrait painter was seized with a disorder in his eyes, which rendered him completely helpless. There was nothing to save him and his family from poverty, but the possibility of making available his daughter Anastasia's musical talent. In those days, perhaps, even more than now, there were grave objections obvious to the mind of an attached father, against the stage, as a calling for a young and attractive girl; but the stern necessity of the case overcame the hesitations which arose in the poor blind portrait painter's mind, and, with an anxious hope that her life would fulfil the goodly promise of her childhood, he resolved that Anastasia should appear in public, as soon as she was qualified by instruction.

Sandoni, at that time the most eminent singing

master in England, was chosen to add the refinements of high art to the musical talent with which nature had gifted her, and which her own industry had improved. An opera singer, called the Baroness, was her instructress in the dramatic branch of her studies. She devoted herself with great and successful diligence to the cultivation of these advantages, and, from her first public effort, took her place in the front rank of the musical world. For a long time she confined her performances to concerts at the York Buildings, and other principal places, where she usually accompanied herself upon the harpsichord. Her voice was originally a soprano, but it sank, after a fit of sickness, to a settled contralto; its compass was extensive; but a slight inaccuracy of tone was occasionally perceptible. Her shake was somewhat incorrect, and remained so, despite her efforts to improve it.

The portrait painter had educated his daughter with great judgment, as well as with watchful care. Upon the solid foundation of a pure and truthful nature he had reared the graceful fabric

of a highly cultivated mind. Not only did Anastasia Robinson excel in ornamental accomplishments, but also in acquirements of a character to command respect, esteem, and affection. Her good sense and kindly disposition enabled her to pursue her difficult path of life without soiling the very hem of her garments, and to obtain eminent success without exciting the envious hatred of less fortunate rivals. Even among the rude voices that discuss, with disdainful interest, the powers and attractions of opera queens, her name was never mentioned but with some expression of deference, as well as of admiration. She may be said to have held then much the same sort of place in public estimation, as the highly gifted and most amiable Swedish lady has held in the present day.

The young singer's success soon placed her father in comfortable circumstances. He took a good house in Golden Square, then a place of considerable pretension; and, encouraged by the support and friendly countenance of several ladies of undoubted position, the painter and his daughter

established weekly concerts and assemblies, in the manner of conversazioni. This undertaking prospered from the commencement; and their assemblies were attended by those of the highest social position, and by "all who had any pretension to politeness and good taste." Among the most frequent and least reputable of the visitors was the celebrated Earl of Peterborough.

From the very first this strange being, who hitherto, through his wild and daring life, had reverenced neither religion, loyalty, nor beauty, reverenced the modest singing girl. With her the fiery nature, which neither toil nor age could tame, was soothed into gentleness. He who, with contemptuous disrespect, had sent back unopened the letter of recall, written by the Queen of England, bore with patience and humility the friendly warnings and reproofs of the poor portrait painter's daughter. He lost no opportunity of seeking her society, and of securing her good opinion by devoted but unobtrusive attention.

Anastasia Robinson achieved complete success

in her first dramatic appearance; her second, as Ismina, the principal part in the opera of Arminio, confirmed her in the position of Prima Donna; a rank which she held almost undisputed for nearly ten years. She soon raised her family to comparative affluence; the rewards of her exertions amounting, it was said, to more than 2000*l.* a year, a sum in those days rarely gained upon the stage. Nevertheless, this life of public exhibition was very grievous to her; it was totally unsuited to her retiring and timid disposition; but, however much she disliked her calling, she never offended others by affecting to despise it; and her irreproachable life and manners still clothed her with a dignity, which even the flaring vulgarities of the green-room could not diminish.

General Hamilton, a cotemporary of Peterborough's dead sons, was his rival in the affections of the portrait painter's daughter: he was one of the most admired and agreeable men of his day, and also possessed, to a large extent, those important advantages, which fortune and family

confer. His attentions were favourably viewed by Anastasia's father, but were looked upon by her with suspicion. She was, however, without doubt, at first somewhat prepossessed in his favour, but this prepossession was not strong enough to prevent her from at once excluding him from her society, upon discovering that he was unworthy of her esteem.

On the other hand, the brilliant wit and world-wide celebrity of Peterborough had also attracted her interest, but had not dazzled her perception. She could not but be gratified by the constant and respectful attention of a man who withheld attention and respect from all but her; while at the same time his evil reputation and irregular life, together with the disparity of years and rank, rendered it improbable that his attentions should assume a more formal shape. This state of things continued for several years, until at length Peterborough succeeded in convincing her—and himself—of the sincerity of his affection. During this time his conduct was, however, far from what this amiable woman

approved; her influence over him was always exerted for his good; and probably there were intervals, when that gentle power restrained in some degree his usually unbridled life.

Although excluded from all public employment, Peterborough still occasionally took part in the politics of the day; he spoke sometimes in the House of Lords, and always was listened to with mingled curiosity and interest. Invariably, when present, he was in the habit of protesting against everything he did not like. There was no peer of his time, whose name appeared so often as his in this peculiar branch of party warfare.

In the memorable debate upon the Septennial Bill, the Earl took a part actively hostile to the Ministry. His keen perception showed him at a glance the unconstitutional tendency of the measure, and he was indisposed to accept the exigencies of the government as a sufficient excuse for this invasion of the rights of the people. The Whigs introduced it as "the bulwark of our civil and religious liberties," as the only means of securing the Protestant succession; while the

opponents of the measure denounced it as "the most daring abuse of Parliamentary power ever known;" to them the peculiarly obnoxious feature was, that the present Parliament thus voted a prolongation of its own existence for years, against the will of the nation.

The Duke of Devonshire brought the bill into the House of Peers, seconded by Lord Rockingham, and supported by the Duke of Argyle, and other leaders of the Whig party: it was read without much discussion. On the motion for the committal of the bill by Lord Cowper, on the 14th of April, the war of party began with unusual vehemence and ability. Nearly all the leading men on both sides joined in the debate. Peterborough was charmed to find this opportunity of opposing the Ministry, which had displaced and slighted him; and of defending against them the fundamental principles of the party, which they themselves professed to lead. After the debate had continued for some time he was challenged to self-defence by a personal allusion in the speech of Argyle's brother, Lord Islay,

who shared in the Duke's hostility against him. "I take notice," said he, "that hurts are incurred since the King's accession; it is chiefly because some persons, who have a great opinion of their own merit, are not in office." He then vindicated the King's administration of patronage, "in having rewarded those who, in the worst of times, had shown their zeal for his succession, and, during the late rebellion, had ventured their lives for his majesty's service."

To this attack of insinuation Peterborough made a defensive reply:—"Whether in employment or no, I have still an entire affection for the King, and I wish I could vote for this bill; but I cannot be for a remedy that may cause a greater evil. As to what has been suggested in favour of those who ventured their lives to serve the government," he added, sneeringly, "men who do not fight for a cause cannot die for it." He concluded by saying, "If this present Parliament continue beyond the time for which they are chosen, I know not how to express the manner of their existence, unless (and he turned

round to where the Bishops were seated), begging leave of that venerable bench, they had recourse to the distinction used in the Athanasian Creed, for they would be 'neither made, nor created, but proceeding.'" In spite of all opposition, the bill passed by a large majority, twenty Peers protesting against it; but, strange to say, Peterborough was not one of the number.

In the summer of 1717, Peterborough fell into bad health, and readily acceded to the recommendation of his physicians, that he should seek his cure in travel. Accordingly he started for Italy through France. His journey continued without any event worth recording, till his arrival at Bologna, in the Papal States, on the 11th of September. There, to his inexpressible surprise and indignation, he was suddenly arrested by two Irish officers, and carried to Fort Urbano, where he was put into close confinement. All his papers were seized and searched, and he himself was also subjected to a close examination. The nature of the questions which were asked of

him at length informed him of the cause of these extraordinary proceedings.

The Pretender was at that time resident at Urbano, near Bologna, and Pope Clement XI. had just then received false intimation from Paris, that the English had laid a plot to take the life of the claimant to their throne. In consequence the Papal government had issued orders that all strangers, especially English, who should come to the neighbourhood, should be taken up and rigidly examined. Under these circumstances, the indignant Earl was kept for some days in close confinement, until the suspicions against him were proved to be unfounded. He was subsequently released with much apologetic politeness, the Pope's officers endeavouring to excuse themselves by asserting that they had not known whom he was.

George I. perhaps would not have been really sorry if the Pope had detained his troublesome subject altogether; nevertheless, the insult to the nation, in the person of one of her peers, could not be tolerated. The King, therefore,

immediately demanded satisfaction of the Holy See, and the answer not being sufficiently prompt and conclusive, the British fleet in the Mediterranean was ordered to the coast of the Roman States. Upon this the Pope perceived the impropriety of Peterborough's arrest, and wrote to "an ally" of Great Britain, in his own handwriting, declaring that his delegate at Bologna had acted "violently, unjustly, and without his knowledge." The Cardinal Legate, on his part, addressed a note to the English Admiral, in which he said that he had prayed for pardon from the Holy Father, and that he now prayed for it from the King of England, for having "inconsiderately arrested a Peer of Great Britain while travelling." Immediately on being released from durance, Peterborough returned to England to push his claim for redress. The excitement of the affair appears to have had the same beneficial effects as were anticipated from his travels, for his health was soon quite restored.

Peterborough's political position at this time was one of complete isolation; he was equally

distrusted and feared by all parties, and he disliked and distrusted all parties equally himself. He hated the Tories for their policy of passive submission, and he hated the Whigs with all the bitterness of personal animosity. Although a republican at heart, he was a zealous supporter of his own privileged order. As is perhaps not unfrequently the case with republican theorists, he limited the application of his theories of equality to impatience of any superiority to himself. He at once came to a stop at any proposition which might tend to level his own position to that of his inferiors.

It was in this spirit that he supported a measure, introduced by the Duke of Buckingham in 1719, to limit the power of the Crown to create new Peers, with the professed object of upholding the independence of the Upper House. This bill was violently opposed in the House of Commons by Mr. Walpole, and there thrown out through his great ability, although passed by a large majority in the House of Lords. He made a powerful impression on the public mind by a

pamphlet, which he then published on this subject, called, "Thoughts of a Member of the Lower House." In this he urged that the House of Lords, if rendered altogether immutable by the prohibition to add to their number, would be enabled to control the working of the constitution.

In answer to this, the republican Peterborough takes up the pen to defend his order, and treats the objections to the bill with great force and vivacity. For the first and last time he appears as a pamphleteer. It would seem as though he were determined to try every occupation of life in succession when he cast himself into this new arena. He writes in opposition to the arguments of Walpole, against the supposed increase of the power of the House of Lords: —

"What are the Lords? A few in number, only possessed (as one writer has it) of an imaginary dignity; they represent nothing but themselves, and so can have no addition of strength but from themselves. They are in no circumstances which can make them popular, but rather remain a mark for envy; the greatest part of them are poor, and none of them are

possessed of dangerous wealth; they have no holdings which procure them dependencies. They are possessed of no castles or strong places, nor have they any being as to action, but at the power of another. That is, when considered as a body, they are dissoluble at pleasure. And can there be a description of more harmless creatures? * * * I must have recourse to an imagination of the Papists to express my idea of the House of Lords in respect to our constitution. * * * The House of Lords is only in imagination a third estate; a situation like purgatory, in this, affairs pass indeed through that channel, they rest there deposited awhile, but the final direction, and the last stroke to all business is given by the solid authority or irresistible influences of the Crown, or House of Commons. * * * But we are asked, who shall oblige *these fixt independent Lords to comply with the laws?* My answer is short: either the King, or the House of Commons, the civil officers, the army, or the mob.

"In my turn let me ask a question. * * * * What have they to contend with against all these supposed enemies? They have an empty embroidered purse, and a black rod."

Peterborough was also known, at this time, as the author of several small, and certainly

indifferent, pieces of poetry; one in "A Letter from a Son of Mars to one of Apollo," printed long after his death in the Public Register, or Weekly Magazine, in 1741, called "La Muse de Cavalier; or an Apology for such Gentlemen as make Poetry their Diversion, not their Business." Another was "A Copy of Verses on the Duchess of Marlborough, addressed to Mr. Harley, after his removal from Court." Although his poetic muse was not very successful in her flights, it must be acknowledged that he is not excelled in epistolary correspondence by any of his cotemporaries.

CHAP. XX.

MEANWHILE Peterborough continued his intimacy with the Robinsons, and his admiration and respect for the amiable Anastasia still increased. It is said that her performance of Griselda, in Bononcini's opera of that name, impressed her eccentric lover very deeply, and completed her conquest over his vanity, as her attractions and virtues had already done over his heart. He at length made up his mind to offer marriage to the public singer, the portrait painter's daughter; and he had the great and undeserved happiness of discovering that she was sincerely attached to him. Womanlike, she was prepared to make every sacrifice that her duty and her honour permitted, even for the man who had so long hesitated to waive his unworthy vanity for her. Even then he had not the courage to declare that which was perhaps the wisest and happiest step

of his life. He was mean enough to use the influence, which her regard gave him over her, to gain her consent that their marriage should remain a secret, "till a more convenient time for making it known should arrive."

Lady Oxford, daughter-in-law of Peterborough's former ally, Mr. Harley, attended at the private marriage as witness and friend. She had upon all occasions shown great esteem and regard for Anastasia Robinson, and at this trying time proved her sincerity.

And thus this miserable vanity, which had marred his whole career, threw a cloud over a union that might have been the source of happiness, such as his troubled life had never known before; and for years cast pain and doubt upon her, whom he had sworn to love, to comfort, and to honour. He was not insensible to the folly, as well as the meanness and cruelty of his own conduct; and by a just retribution, the constantly recurring annoyances, which their doubtful position with regard to each other caused, were keenly felt by him.

For some time after her marriage, Anastasia remained upon the stage, until, in 1723, a circumstance occurred, which resulted in her complete retirement into private life. Peterborough frequently attended her to the theatre, and from their evident intimacy, and from his peculiar reputation, the voice of scandal at length began to assail the hitherto irreproachable lady. On one occasion, at a morning rehearsal, Senesino, a contralto singer, with whom she was acting, offered her an insult, which, perhaps, her doubtful position to a certain extent induced. She indignantly complained of the injury to Peterborough, who chanced to be in attendance: his rage knew no bounds; he seized the unhappy delinquent, dragged him behind the scenes, where he publicly and violently caned him, as long as he was able. He then compelled him, on his knees, to beg the offended lady's pardon.

This affair caused a great sensation, and not only confirmed the unfavourable reports with regard to Miss Anastasia Robinson, but gave employment to all the satirical wit of London.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who had a spite against Peterborough, for refusing to take her part in a quarrel with Pope, relates the story with malicious glee, and mendaciously adds, that "my lady miscarried" from the agitation of the scene. Lord Stanhope, with whom the Earl had never been reconciled, since their dispute in Spain, had the temerity to make "the old Don Quixote" of the affair the subject of some jokes more witty than prudent, and was immediately challenged in consequence, Lord Delaware being Peterborough's second. This mischievous folly was, however, fortunately discovered in time; the noble quarrellers were put under arrest, and the silly affair blew over without bloodshed.

About this time Mr. Robinson died: Anastasia then removed with her mother to a house which Peterborough took for them at Fulham, near his own villa at Parson's Green. They had separate establishments, and at that time never lived under the same roof: Anastasia's half-sister, Margaret, also a very attractive and accomplished

woman, was just then married to a brother of the well-known Dr. Arbuthnott.

She was destined to be a miniature painter by her father, but always shewed a marked distaste for the art, and could not fix her attention upon it. Her sole delight was in music; she sang brilliantly, and with more correctness than her elder sister. She soon devoted herself to this more congenial pursuit; Bononcini was her instructor for some time in London, and she went to Paris to complete her artistic education. There were, however, two insurmountable drawbacks to her success as a public singer: the first, a nervous bashfulness, which destroyed all her self-command when endeavouring to exhibit; and, secondly, her figure was very diminutive, far below the ordinary height of women.

Peterborough's marriage made little change in his outward life. He still lived much in the society of those who suited his taste, and who would bear with the uncontrollable violence of his temper, and the great eccentricity of his conduct. His principal friends were still Swift and Pope,

the latter of whom Lady Wortley Montague accuses of having courted him, and several other old men whom she names, in the hope of being left legacies. Peterborough had very little to leave. His extravagance at all times, but especially his magnificence in Spain, and in his continental embassies, had materially diminished a property, which had never been very considerable. Years before this, the spiteful Duchess of Marlborough described him as having "wasted his fortune, and worn out his credit." He certainly never sought to replenish them at the public expense.

Although now not far from three-score years of age, his strange vivacity continued undiminished. At times he astonished London with acts of eccentricity bordering upon insanity; in word and deed he was reckless of all consequences. Had not he been, to a great extent, a privileged person from his well-known oddities, he would, without doubt, have met with some fatal check, in those days, when the laws of polite society were written in blood. One day that he was passing through the Strand in his coach, he saw

a player in full court dress, with white silk stockings, picking his way carefully through the street, which chanced to be unusually dirty. Peterborough was seized with an irresistible desire for mischief; he jumped from his coach, drew his sword, rushed violently at the poor player, who immediately took to flight in the greatest alarm, and utterly regardless of his white silk stockings. His relentless assailant followed with determined pertinacity, pricking him behind with his sword, and forcing him through the filthiest part of the streets, till the unhappy man was dabbled with mud, from the powdered wig down to the once white silk stockings. Having accomplished his purpose, Peterborough returned to his coach, reseated himself with great gravity, and proceeded on his business.

He frequently gave dinner-parties at Peterborough House, and sometimes entertained his guests with admirable music, in which Bononcini, Martini, Greene, and others of the most famous performers of the day, assisted Anastasia Robinson. At other times, he amused and delighted

them by relating his adventures in Spain and elsewhere, which, wonderful as they really were, lost nothing by his mode of describing them. Among other things, he was in the habit of stating that, during the War of the Succession, he had frequently been in danger of perishing for want of food; and that even when he could get it, he was often obliged to cook it himself: he thus became a good artist, and, from the force of habit, still sometimes dressed his own dinner. Certain it was that, until disabled by advancing age, he constantly did so. Those who have dined with him at Parson's Green, have seen him at work in a dress for the purpose, like that of a tavern cook: he usually retired from his company about an hour before dinner-time, and having despatched his culinary affairs, would return properly dressed to his place among the guests, and astonish them by his wit and varied information.

Towards the close of George I.'s reign, the state of society in England was perhaps at the very lowest. Corruption, profligacy, contempt for all religion, and even for all principle,

had become frightfully general among the rich, and vice, debauchery, and discontent among the poor. The extravagant expectations of the nation from the infamous South Sea scheme, contributed greatly to this condition of things, by encouraging a reckless expenditure, and a hitherto unknown luxury. Clubs were formed, whose only object was the encouragement of blasphemy, to which the sole ground and qualification for admission was eminence in crime. Many men of high rank and considerable ability united themselves in one of these societies, which transcended all others in the atrocity of its rules and habits. The ceremonies of admission were of a nature that insanity only could excuse. They included vows against every principle of virtue and propriety, and a formal defiance of the power of Heaven. The appropriate name it assumed was the "Hell-fire Club." With this diabolical society public rumour strongly connected the name of the witty and gifted, but profligate Duke of Wharton.

In 1721, these evils had risen to such a height,

that they became the subject of consideration in the national legislature. The Earl of Nottingham complained in the House of Lords of "the growth of atheism, profaneness, and immorality." A bill was brought in shortly afterwards by the Lord Willoughby de Broke, Dean of Windsor, ostensibly directed against these monstrous evils, but in reality to restrain the liberty of conscience lately conceded to the non-conformists. It met with strong episcopal support, and also with violent opposition from those who "had consciences that loved liberty, and those who had no consciences at all." The bill proposed to render it penal to speak against the Thirty-nine Articles.

The motion for committal of the bill was made by the Archbishop of Canterbury; Lord Onslow called it "a bill for persecution," and, although claiming to be a sincere churchman, moved that it should be thrown out. Lord Trevor argued for the measure with more zeal than judgment, concluding by saying, "I verily believe that the present calamity, occasioned by the South Sea project, is a judgment of God on the blasphemy

and profaneness of the nation." To which Lord Onslow retorted, "The noble peer who has just spoken must then be a great sinner, for he has lost considerably by this South Sea scheme." The Duke of Wharton followed, against the bill: "I am not insensible of the common talk and opinion of the town concerning myself, and am therefore glad of this opportunity of justifying myself, by declaring that I am far from being a patron of blasphemy, or any enemy to religion; but, on the other hand, I cannot be in favour of this bill, because I believe it to be repugnant to the Holy Scripture." Then, taking an old family Bible out of his pocket, he quoted and read several chapters of the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Paul, to the great astonishment of the House.

One of the principal lay supporters of the bill was the Lord Bathurst, to whom the two well-known satirical lines from Gay's fables were applied:

> "Shall grave and formal pass for wise,
> When men the solemn owl despise?"

But by far the most powerful opponent of the

measure was Peterborough. He had a bitter hatred of intolerance in every form, but especially when spurred on by the bench of Bishops. "Although I am for a Parliamentary king," said he, "I have no desire for a Parliamentary God, or a Parliamentary religion: and if the House be for such an one, I shall go to Rome, and endeavour to be chosen a Cardinal; for I should rather sit in the Conclave, than with your Lordships on these terms." After a vehement debate, the opponents of the bill carried their point by a considerable majority.

On the death of the great Duke of Marlborough in 1722, Peterborough sank the enmity of years, and attended at the funeral as one of ten assistants to the chief mourners, all of whom, except the Duke of Montrose, were Knights of the Garter, and wore the collars and stars of their "most noble" order. The pomp and magnificence of these obsequies were said never to have had a parallel in England. The bad taste and incongruity of the arrangements were not less singular. On the 25th of May of this year, Peterborough

was appointed general of marines, a highly appropriate appointment for one so distinguished as he had been, both by land and sea. This rank was bestowed upon him solely on account of his war services; for he remained in the cold shade of political opposition during the whole of this reign.

Peterborough was, however, seized with a strong fit of Hanoverian loyalty in the following year, upon the introduction of the Bill of Pains and Penalties against Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, in the House of Lords. In this case, hatred of the Stuart race and of the Roman Catholic religion impelled him to join heartily in the persecution which ended by the deprivation and banishment of that prelate in the month of May, by votes of both Houses. The learned and able physician, Dr. Friend, who had accompanied Peterborough in the Spanish campaign, and contributed so largely to the removal of the imputations which had been brought against the Earl, being a member at this time of the Lower House,

took an active part in the bishop's defence. The only reward he received for his exertions, beyond that which his own conscience doubtless gave, was, that he was seized on suspicion of treason and sent to prison.

Peterborough's friend Pope, who was then living with him at Fulham, took a different view of the bishop's case from that of his host, and writes to Dean Swift in lamentation over the condition of things:—"It is sure very ill fate that all those I most loved, and with whom I most lived, must be banished. Sure this is a nation that is cursedly afraid of too much politeness, and cannot regain one great genius but at the expense of another." (Lord Bolingbroke had just then returned from exile, and Dr. Atterbury had been banished.) "I tremble for my Lord Peterborough, whom I now lodge with. He has too much wit as well as courage to make a solid general; and if he escapes being banished by others, I fear he will banish himself."

It was in allusion to this period of their life

that Pope writes, in his "Imitations of Horace,"—

"He whose light'ning pierced the Iberian lines,
Now forms my quincunx, and now ranks my vines.
Or tames the genius of the stubborn plain,
Almost as quickly as he conquer'd Spain."

After this, Peterborough again went abroad and continued wandering for some time. "Lord Peterborough can go to any climate," writes Dean Swift, "but can never stay in any."

Meanwhile his amiable wife remained in perfect seclusion, except for the visits of Lady Oxford and a few other intimate friends. Her lot in life was one of severe trial. Peterborough's violent temper and insane vanity kept up a constant irritation, which required all the excellence of her gentle disposition to endure. To a person of her quiet habits, and delicacy of thought and feelings, this reckless man must have been, as a contemporary describes him, "a very aweful husband."

Peterborough next appeared upon the political stage in 1727. He took an active part in the

debate upon the King's Speech in January of that year, when the dangerous position of His Majesty's German dominions was under the consideration of the House of Lords. Several peers, headed by Lord Bathurst, strongly opposed such preparations as might give offence to the emperor and the King of Spain, and which he argued were an unnecessary expense and evil to the country, already grievously overburdened. From these views Peterborough strongly dissented. "Let our circumstances be what they may, we ought to exert ourselves for the honour and dignity of the Crown, and defend the just rights and privileges of the nation."

The death of George I. in the course of this year made no difference in Peterborough's political isolation; but the approaching ceremonies of the coronation gave him an opportunity of exercising his wit. Being asked one day by a Frenchman whether these ceremonies were to take place, "*Sacre-t-on les rois chez vous, milord?*" "*Oui,*" replied he, "*on les sacre, et on les massacre aussi.*"

CHAP. XXI.

THE accession of George II. will be a fitting opportunity of introducing a strange episode in Peterborough's strange life. For four or five years he had been carrying on a correspondence with Mrs. Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk, who was at this time in the highest good graces of the new sovereign. To this fair lady Peterborough vowed devoted attachment, she being at the time both under the care of her husband, and in the gracious favour of the King. She was forty years of age, and her new lover, who was between sixty and seventy at the time, a married man, and a grandfather of twenty years' standing.

His acquaintance with the object of his absurd adoration began in 1717, shortly after the marriage of his nephew, young Mordaunt, with the widow of the unfortunate Lord Mohun, who was a great friend of Mrs. Howard. The correspondence

continued many years; the date of the commencement is not known, but it only ended with his death, and was incredibly ridiculous throughout.

The following description of Mrs. Howard gives her in complete picture: —

"She is made up of negatives, and has not character enough to say a downright No. A tall and fine figure in a green taffety dress, set off with rose-coloured ribands; fair hair and skin; a white muslin apron, trimmed with delicate lace, ruffles of same; a white and rounded arm. A chip hat with flowers, placed quite at the back of the light hair, which leaves the white broad forehead exposed.

"When she and her husband were staying at Hanover, they asked some people to dinner, and Mrs. Howard was obliged to cut off her hair and sell it to pay for the said dinner. Her features are regular; her eyes a soft blue. She is singularly young looking; she is incapable of the keen feeling and passionate sorrow which mark the brow with lines, and fade the cheek. The only expression of her face is a sweet and gentle repose. An attachment to her would be only an agreeable and easy habit. She is the type of a social system whose morality is expediency, and whose religion is good breeding. In

such an atmosphere it is scarcely possible for a generous sympathy or a warm emotion to exist."

Swift writes of her:

"I shall say nothing of her wit or beauty, which are freely allowed by all persons of taste and eyes who know her: for beauty being transient, and a trifle, cannot justly make part of a character intended to last; and I leave others to celebrate her wit, because it will be of little use in the light I design to show her.

"There is no politician more dextrous in adapting themselves, or in unapparently gaining information. Sir Robert Walpole and she both think they understand each other, and are both of them mistaken. She has great interest at Court, but uses it parsimoniously and interestedly. She sometimes is deceived when she thinks she deceives. In all affairs of life, except that of a courtier, she acts with justice, generosity, and truth. Even as a courtier, she will only do hurt when it is deserved. If she had never seen a court, it is possible she might have been a friend. She is rather latitudinarian in religion. She is, upon the whole, an excellent companion for men of the best accomplishments who have nothing to ask."

On the 10th of August, 1723, Mrs. Howard wrote to Gay the poet, entreating his further

assistance in carrying on a correspondence "with a man of wit," and alluding to assistance already received. From the manner in which the request is made, it would appear that she considered that the poet would be in considerable danger, if his interference were discovered by her fiery old admirer. She treats her conquest half as a source of pride and half as a matter of fun; but she certainly valued Peterborough's letters very highly, and preserved them with great care, although they appear little deserving of Horace Walpole's praise for "careless wit and negligent grace." They are unworthy of his peculiar reputation, and in the stupidest style of formality. Had there been only one or two of these letters, it might have been supposed that they were written in burlesque of the then existing style of exaggeration; but as they were upwards of forty in number, and extended over so many years, there is no doubt of their having been as much in earnest as they were ridiculous. Poor Mrs. Howard, even with Gay's assistance, found it very difficult to keep up the shuttlecock of

nonsense. Peterborough's letters were written in a beautiful hand, with a neatness and accuracy of orthography and punctuation unusual at that day, and as little characteristic of the fiery and irregular temper of the writer, as of the style and manner.

Peterborough first assails Mrs. Howard in rhyme. The following verses of his composition were "much admired" and "well known" in those days, which speaks little for the poetical taste of the age. Walpole considers them and a few other, even inferior, verses, a sufficient claim for Peterborough to be included among his "royal and noble authors," and says, that the life of the Earl of Peterborough and Lord Capel, in the second edition of his work, cost him more trouble than all the rest put together.

1.

"I said to my heart, between sleeping and waking,
'Thou wild thing, that always art leaping or aching,
What black, brown, or fair, in what clime, in what nation,
By turns has not brought thee a pit-a-patation?'

2.

" Thus accused, the wild thing gave this sober reply.—
' See, the heart without motion though Celia pass'd by ?'
Not the beauty she has, not the wit that she borrows,
Give the eye any joys, or the heart any sorrows.

3.

" When our Sappho appears, — she whose wit so refined
I am forced to applaud with the rest of mankind —
Whatever she says, is with spirit and fire ;
Every word I attend but I only admire.

4.

" Prudentia as vainly would put in her claim,
Ever gazing on heaven, though man is her aim :
'Tis love, not devotion, that turns up her eyes —
Those stars of this world are too good for the skies.

5.

" But Chloe so lively, so easy, so fair,
Her wit so genteel, without art, without care,
When she comes in my way — the motion, the pain,
The leapings and achings, return all again.

6.

"Oh! wonderful creature, a woman of reason!
Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season.
When so easy to guess who this angel may be,
Would one think Mrs. Howard ne'er dreamt it was she?"

The extant correspondence commences with the following effusion from him:—

From Lord Peterborough.

"As I can as well live without meat and sleep, as without thinking of her who has possession of my soul, so, to find some relief, in never having any conversation with this adored lady, I have been forced, when alone, to make many a dialogue between her and myself; but, alas! madam, the conclusions are always in her favour, and I am often most cruelly condemned by myself—nay more, her indifference, and almost all her rigor, are approved.

"Permit me to give you an account of my last duet without my partner; and as, by the original articles of our scribbling treaty, you were sincerely to tell me your opinion, so remember your long silence, and give an answer to this.

"On my part I was representing to her the violence, the sincerity of my passion; but what I most insisted

on was, that, in most circumstances, it was different from that of other men. It is true, I confessed, with common lovers, she was the person that I wished should *grant;* but with this addition, that she was the only woman that I could allow to *refuse.* In a word, I am resolved, nay content, to be only hers, though it may be impossible she should ever be mine.

"To bear injuries or miseries insensibly were a vain pretence—not to resent, not to feel, is impossible; but, when I dare venture to think she is unjust or cruel, my revenge falls upon all of her sex but herself. I hate, detest, and renounce all other creatures in hoop-petticoats, and, by a strange weakness, can only wish well to her who has the power and will to make me miserable.

"Commonly, lovers are animated by the gay look, the blooming cheek, and the red lips of the mistress; but, heavens! what do I feel when I see anguish and paleness invade that charming face? My soul is in a mutiny against those powers that suffer it, and my heart perfectly melts away in tenderness. But for whom have I such concern? For that dear lady, who hardly thinks of me, or scarce regretteth she makes me wretched.

"But, alas! it was in this last dialogue I found my misery complete; for, you must know, the lady had listened with some attention—mercy was in her looks,

softness in her words, and gentleness in all her air: 'Were this all true,' she asked, 'what could you expect? What do you think your due?'

"Never was poor mortal so dismayed. Though she was absent, I had not the courage to make one imaginary request: had she been present, I could only have expressed my wishes in a trembling look. Oh wretched prodigality, where one gives all and dares demand no return! Oh unfortunate avarice, which covets all, and can merit nothing! Oh cruel ambition, which can be satisfied with nothing less than what no man can deserve!

"It was long before I could recover from the terror and amaze into which I had thrown myself. At last I ventured to make this answer: 'If what I may pretend to be less than love, surely it is something more than common friendship.'"

Mrs. Howard's answer.

"I do not know whether your Lordship expects I should answer every letter you write in exact time and form, in order to provoke you to write another. If you do, I fancy your last was an artifice to draw me into declaring my sentiments on the subject of love first, which I think a little unfair—for the most that is expected from a woman is to be upon the defensive. Suppose I should declare my sentiments first: your

Lordship, who has been so conversant with our sex might very civilly imagine, that I hated contradiction; you might be biassed to think my notions pretty enough for a woman; and your complaisance might draw you in unawares to flatter my understanding, by agreeing to everything I said. What should I get by all this? Only the pleasure of hearing myself talk: and I fancy the women that have been treated in this well-bred manner all their lives, have that pleasure wholly confined to their own dear selves; and I look upon this as the reason why women generally talk more than men: they are seldom contradicted, and, consequently, they think themselves oftener in the right. Not that I would have your Lordship imagine that I love contradiction, in order to support a dispute: no, the conversation that pleases me is, when a person (if such a person can be found) will think freely before me, and speak what he thinks; rather than the common way of playing off sentiments, to show what can be said, and not what he himself thinks right.

"I grant, my Lord, we can expect this sort of treatment from none but friends or lovers, and none but friends and lovers deserve it; but he that is sincere is never upon his guard, and cannot do otherwise."

To this lamentably dull production Lord Peterborough returns answer in a letter of equal

dulness, from which the following extracts are the most characteristic of the writer: —

"If condemned to be a woman's slave, may it be to one nobly maintaining her own liberty: if I were to receive any favour, let it be from one who knows how to grant, and when to refuse—whose compliments are not alike to every one. Oh, the merit of the least favour which is particular; and how little merit in an undistinguished all!

"A lady guarded with wit and beauty keeps man and woman at what distance she pleases. Learn this from one not wholly ignorant of nature: wit, beauty, and youth may be resisted; but with wit and beauty, believe her sincere, the creature becomes divine and irresistible."

Mrs. Howard's answer is only interesting in the following paragraphs, which throw some further light upon the nature of this ridiculous correspondence:—

"The woman that is civil and obliging to every one, giveth signal proof of her courage; for she that trusts every man's vanity, runs greater risks than she that trusts one man's honour.

"Your Lordship's caution about not showing your

letter I shall *sacredly* observe, lest I give any person occasion to censure your Lordship of flattery, and myself of credulity."

In spite of the "rapport" indicated in Mrs. Howard's last sentence, the elderly lover did not feel quite satisfied with the progress of his suit; he writes in answer:

"I am sorry to find by your letter, that I am under the fatal necessity of never pleasing ladies; or rather that I must despair of ever pleasing one of your sex, though I should confine my ambition to the service of the one individual person I might have a mind to please.

"I have been under so long a habit of sincerity, and am so ignorant of all false arts, that my condition is desperate. Were I to assume the arts of a modern gallant, I should act the part very ill, and spoil all with an out-of-fashion sincerity.

"You make use of a very powerful word in the conclusion of your letter, '*sacredly*.' I return you the strongest expression I can use, *upon my honour*. I shall certainly do as you say you do upon the same occasion, were it only for this reason, that I can never be more in the right than when I follow your example."

Mrs. Howard responds, bantering her Amadis with ponderous playfulness on his professions of sincerity; the last paragraph will probably be enough, even for those who are most fond of love-letters:—

"If all I have said cannot prevail upon you to think me entirely sincere, yet I beg you at least to half believe me, when, while I accuse all the rest of the world, I except your lordship and myself."

In the next letter the venerable lover attempts a description of the nature of his passion for his "Amoret" as he calls her:—

"I have found love in so many disguises and false appearances in others, and even in myself, that I thought the true passion indiscoverable, and impossible to be described; but what I pretend to represent I have so perfectly felt, that methinks I should be the better able to express it.

"The beginnings of this passion, whether true or false, are pleasing; but if true, the progress is through mountains and rocks: the unhappy traveller goes through rugged ways, and, what is most cruel, he is walking in the dark on the edge of precipices; he labours under a thousand difficulties—success must cost him dear, and then, alas! the acquisition is insecure.

"The greatest hardship is this: we seem bound to the same port; we sail in treacherous seas in quest of a woman's heart, but without a compass; there is no beaten path or common road; as many objects, so many humours; what prevails with one may displease the other, in this fantastic pilgrimage of love. He that goes out of the way may soonest arrive at his journey's end, and the bold have better success than the faithful, the fool than the wise."

Poor Mrs. Howard must have been sadly puzzled to answer this solemn nonsense: it is difficult to comprehend her object in committing herself to such a ridiculous correspondence; but her vanity was doubtless gratified by being the heroine, even of a farce, with so distinguished a hero. In the continuation of the above letter Lord Peterborough proceeds to illustrate his subject with a warmth and breadth of colouring more suited to the style of the last than of the present century: to this the coy lady of forty answers with playful discreetness:—

"Every one that loves thinks his own mistress an Amoret; and, therefore, ask any lover who and what

Amoret is, he will describe his own mistress as she appears to himself; but the common practice of men of gallantry is, to make an Amoret of every lady they write to. And, my lord, after you have summed up all the fine qualities necessary to make an Amoret, I am under some apprehensions you will conclude with a compliment, by saying, I am she."

Lord Peterborough's reply is a pathetic remonstrance to the fair trifler:—

"It is only in the nature of devils to love deceit and the torment of fellow-creatures; and ought a lady to entice an honest heart only that her equipage of lovers may be more complete?"

But prose is insufficient to convey his despairing tenderness; he tries poetry:—

"Lovers are mute if silent looks can't speak—
In words, alas! our thoughts we dare not break;
The trembling tongue begs of the suppliant eye
To tell the tale of silent misery."

He proceeds with a regretful eulogium upon the manner in which the Spanish ladies understood the noble sentiments of love, as compared with their English sisters. Mrs. Howard, some-

what piqued at the unfavourable comparison, declares that —

"The civilities of the Spanish ladies are like those of shopkeepers, to encourage a multitude of customers."

She concludes her letter by explaining her (the English) idea of love: —

"That caution, that awe, that reserved respect, that fear of offence, are the strongest declarations of love. I think a woman has reason to suspect a person that has it in his power abruptly to declare his passion. Love discloses itself without design, and by such imperceptible degrees, that I believe it is generally very difficult to determine which of the lovers made the first declaration."

In Peterborough's answer he makes a statement at the first part of which the reader will probably not be surprised: — "I feel myself the greatest fool in nature near the woman in the world who has the most wit," and then despairingly proceeds: —

"What I have lost, I know; in a word, all satisfaction, and my quiet; and I remain tasteless to all pleasures, and to all of your sex but one.

"Laws, rules, reason, whither are you fled? Too true, all are neglected and lost for the sake of one. Curiosity has no power, revenge no taste, ambition no attraction. There seem but two ideas left in nature, —to love, and to obey. I fly from danger for a little time by absolute necessity; I fear I should do it by choice if I could foresee my fate."

He concludes by a page of poetry about "hugging fatal chains,"—"transporting fires," and all that sort of thing. Mrs. Howard has, it appears left two of his letters unanswered, and at length apologizes for her delay:

"Most women speak before they think, and I find it necessary to think before I write. You talk of flying from dangers; I cannot think your lordship would fly from an imaginary one, who have stood so many real ones. I would not have you call it a flight, but rather a retreat; for by your past conduct (if you will give me leave to make use of a double entendre), I suppose you will rally again."

Peterborough's answer is dated Amsterdam, July 5th, year unknown; this letter deserves to be given at some length, as the very climax of the whole absurdity:—

"Change of air, the common remedy, has no effect, and flight, the refuge of all who fear, gives me no manner of security or ease; a fair devil haunts me wherever I go, though, perhaps, not so malicious as the black ones, yet more tormenting.

"How much more tormenting is the beauteous devil than the ugly one! The first I am always thinking of; the other comes seldom in my thoughts. The terrors of the ugly devil very often diminish upon consideration; but the oppressions of the fair one become more intolerable every time she comes into my mind.

"The chief attribute of the devil is tormenting. Who could look upon you, and give you that title? who can feel what I do, and give you any other?

"But, most certainly, I have more to lay to the charge of the fair one than can be objected to Satan or Beelzebub. We may believe they have only a mind to torment because they are tormented; if they endeavour to procure us misery, it is because they are in pain: they must be our companions in suffering, but my white devil partakes none of my torments.

"In a word, give me heaven, for it is in your power; or may you have an equal hell! Judge of the disease by the extravagant symptoms: one moment I curse you, the next I pray to you. Oh, hear my prayers, or I am miserable.

"Forgive me if I threaten you: take this for a proof as well as punishment. If you can prove inhuman, you shall have reproaches from Moscow, China, or the barbarous quarters of Tartary. Believe me, for I think I am in earnest; this I am sure of; I could not endure my ungrateful country but for your sake."

Mrs. Howard's answer to this is the least stupid letter in the correspondence:—

"July 26th.

"I have carefully perused your lordship's letter about your fair devil and your black devil, your hell and tortures, your heaven, and happiness — those sublime expressions which gentlemen use in their gallantries and distresses.

"I suppose by your fair devil you mean nothing less than an angel. If so, my lord, I beg leave to give some reasons why I think a woman is neither like an angel nor a devil, and why successful and unhappy love does not in the least resemble heaven and hell. It is true you may quote ten thousand gallant letters as precedents for the use of these love terms, which have a mighty captivating sound in the ears of a woman, and have been with equal propriety applied to all women in all ages.

"In the first place, my lord, an angel pretends to

be nothing else but a *spirit.* If, then, a woman was no more than an angel, what could a lover get by the pursuit.

"The black devil is a spirit too, but one who has lost his beauty and retained his pride. Tell a woman this, and try how she likes the simile.

"The pleasure of an angel is offering praise; the pleasure of a woman is in receiving it.

"Successful love is very unlike heaven; because you may have success one hour and lose it the next. Heaven is unchangeable. Who can say so of love or lovers?

"In love there are as many heavens as there are women; so that, if a man be so unhappy as to lose one heaven, he need not throw himself headlong into hell.

"This thought might be carried further, But perhaps you will ask me, if a woman be like neither angel nor devil, what is she like? I answer, that the only thing that is like a woman is—*another woman.*

"How often has your lordship persuaded foreign ladies that nothing but them could make you forsake your dear country? But, at present, I find it is more to your purpose to tell me that I am the only woman that could prevail with you to stay in your ungrateful country."

Peterborough's answer is too dull, long, and profane for insertion here; the last paragraph will suffice: —

"But I declare you guilty of the highest mistake and heresy in love, if you take from me my dream of heaven in you, and think any other woman could with reality make me amends."

Mrs. Howard having replied much as usual, he again writes; and the following occurs, in which there is a vein of melancholy sincerity: —

"Fair lady, I have passed my whole life, I may almost say, without any purpose to my own advantage. In the precepts for love I have exceeded the command, for I have loved my neighbours, or some of them at least, much better than myself; in which number I am sure you might find the white devil. Now those that love in this manner have no self-interested purpose, so much are they wholly possessed with the desire of pleasing her they adore."

In his next letter he writes in a livelier strain, commencing with some verses, which he quotes as Pope's, but which are more justly ascribed to

Parnell; the authorship is perhaps only negatively important to the reputation of either.

Mrs. Howard complains of having been ill for some time, but is now sufficiently recovered to write rather a smart answer:—

"Let us leave the goddesses and angels to enjoy their heaven in quiet; for since none of our present lovers can bring creditable witnesses that they ever saw a goddess or an angel, how can they tell but that the comparison may do their ladies an injustice?

"I think the woman must be still a little Miss in her way of thinking, who can be taken with being called a goddess or an angel.

"I have forgot that I am labouring to advise a person in matters which he must know much better than myself; for I am very certain that no person whatever understands a woman, so little as a woman."

Two or three other dismally dull letters pass between them, from which there is nothing worth extracting. Again Lord Peterborough writes:—

"Take me, or I shall ramble all my life in restlessness and change. Accept of the libertine for a slave, and try how faithfully I can love, honour, and obey. As far as I can judge of myself, if you give me leave

naturally to express my wants and desires, I desire nothing more than your esteem, and want nothing but your heart."

She answers banteringly: —

"Consider, my lord, you have but one heart, and then consider whether you have a right to dispose of it. Is there not a lady in Paris who is convinced that nobody has it but herself? Did you not bequeath it to another lady at Turin? At Venice you disposed of it to six or seven, and you again parted with it at Naples and in Sicily.

"I am therefore obliged, my lord, to believe, that one who disposes of his heart in so profuse a manner is like a juggler, who seems to fling away a piece of money, but still has it in his own keeping."

Peterborough's answer is very characteristic: —

"I give you the preference to all the women in the world; with authority too, since I believe no person ever had the opportunity of seeing such variety.

"I have no knowledge of the lady you begin with. I was ever too good an Englishman to submit to a French enemy; and were I to offer any thing to a lady at Paris, it should be three bottles of champagne, and not one heart.

"At Turin I was so busy in making kings, that I had not time to think of ladies; and was so far from making a conveyance, that I know no person there ever had the least pretence to me, nor I to them.

"Venice, indeed, was an idle place, and proper enough for an idle engagement; but alas! madam, hate does not differ more from love than a Venetian amusement from an English passion,—such a one as I feel for you.

"In truth, you never had in any country, nor could have, but one rival; for in no place I ever found any to compare with you but one, and that was an English lady, and a wife."

It is generally believed that this was his own unacknowledged wife, Anastasia Robinson. The extracts from this correspondence shall conclude with a letter in a more reasonable tone, but full of bitterness against the Duke of Marlborough, and the splendid rewards of Blenheim, as contrasted with the indifference shown to his own services:—

"Madam,

"Some part of my life I have spent in accusations of the fair sex. Sometimes women were vain or

faithless, sometimes too easy, sometimes too cruel, in my opinion; but of late my complaints are all against the men. The young appear to me empty disagreeable beaux; and those advanced in years ill-bred, presuming, and ignorant pretenders, whether they deal in gallantry or politics.

"I have complained sometimes of fate, sometimes of you, without considering, I confess, how seldom we have just pretences to what we wish for; but faults acknowledged should ever be forgiven. The lady I most revere gives perhaps more than I deserve: if you honour me with your good opinion, and give me sometimes a thought, I acknowledge the favour with the utmost gratitude.

"Ladies and kings have their negative voice; but you would not, nay, some things you could not, deny. You may lay constraints upon our words and actions, but our thoughts are free: they approach you at the greatest distance. I assure you, from the wild romantic cottage [Bevis Mount, near Southampton], where I pass my time, I should send few of them to courts and castles, unless you were in them.

"*My* Blenheim would not afford lodgings for two maids of honour and their equipage, and yet I cannot forbear wishing that you somehow or other could see my purchase of fourteen pounds a year.

"Though you had seen the prodigies of Norfolk the

day before [an allusion to Sir Robert Walpole's place, Houghton], I should depend upon your partiality to Bevis Mount, the noble title of my palace which has put the public to no expense.

"Were it not presuming upon your goodness and permission, I should not trouble you with the enclosed.

"I am, madam,

"Your most faithful, obedient servant,

"PETERBOROUGH."

CHAP. XXII.

But while Peterborough carried on this ridiculous correspondence, his affections, if they deserved to be so called, were still firmly fixed upon his "best friend," his gentle and self-sacrificing wife. At one time he was seized with a violent attack of illness while at Bevis Mount, to which he alludes in his last letter to Lady Suffolk. This cottage was very small, but beautifully situated, overlooking Itchin Ferry, and the Southampton Water. On a terrace near at hand, which commands a view of the sea and of the woods of Netley Abbey, there was, a few years since, a cenotaph, with a short inscription, to the memory of the great Earl of Peterborough. In his later years, this cottage became his favourite residence, and he enlarged it considerably, also ornamenting the grounds. At the entrance to the lawn he had arranged several guns, and flags,

and weapons, taken by him in the War of the Succession. It is to these that Pope alludes, in his first epistle to Lord Bolingbroke, when he says that our generals—

"Hang their old trophies o'er the garden gate."

He earnestly solicited his wife to come and watch over his sick bed at this place, which, however, she with unusual firmness refused, unless with the condition that she should be allowed to wear her wedding-ring, although she did not even then allude to her being publicly acknowledged as his wife. He for a while resisted this most moderate stipulation for her respectability; but finding her inexorable, he at length consented. Her attendance upon him was marked by the tenderest care; he rapidly recovered, but her devotion injured her health at the time to an extent that nearly cost her life.

And yet even then, he, who was so profusely generous of all else that he possessed, could not be generous or just enough to sacrifice his miserable and mistaken vanity, by acknowledging this

exemplary lady as his wife. He who despised all constituted authority, and who had never shrunk from personal danger, bowed down servilely to a false social law, and trembled at the prospect of sarcasms, which he thought might follow the act of vindication of a fair fame that should have been as dear to him as his own. Several of his more intimate friends, however, who were in the habit of visiting him at Bevis Mount, were aware of his being married, and spoke of Anastasia Robinson by her rightful name of Lady Peterborough.

The Earl had many severe attacks of illness in his later years; but, in spite of them, his wit and animation continued to the last. He passed most of his time at his Southampton cottage, where his garden constituted his chief enjoyment, heightened at times by visits from Pope, Swift, and others of his friends. He occasionally made his appearance at Court, and accomplished several short journeys on the Continent, but took no part whatever in public affairs. The men with whom, and against whom, he had struggled in the

political arena, had passed away. A new system of government had arisen, one to him utterly odious,—that of venality and corruption.

The tenor of his thoughts and habits during this part of his life may be best learned from the following letters, in which his style and power bear favourable comparison with those of the practised pens of Swift and Pope themselves. The latter writes to him, on the 28th of August, 1728:

"My Lord,

"I presume you may before this time be returned from the contemplation of many beauties; animal and vegetable in gardens, and possibly some rational in ladies, to the better enjoyment of your own at Bevis Mount. I hope and believe all you have seen will duly contribute to it. I am not so fond of making compliments to ladies as I was twenty years ago, or I would say there are some very reasonable, and one in particular, there. I think you happy, My Lord, in being at least half the year almost as much your own master as I am mine the whole year; and with all the disadvantageous incumbrance of quality, facts, and honour, as mere a gardener, loiterer and labourer, as he who never had titles, or from whom they are taken, I have an eye, in the last of these glorious appellations,

to the style of a Lord degraded or attainted: methinks they give him a better title than they deprive him of, in calling him *labourer: agricultura*, says Tully, *proxima sapientiæ*, which is more than can be said by most modern nobility of Grace or Right Honourable, which are often *proxima stultitiæ*. The great Turk, you know, is often a gardener, or of a meaner trade, and are there not, my Lord, some circumstances in which you would resemble the great Turk? The two paradises are not ill connected, of gardens and gallantry; and some there are (not to name my Lord B.), who pretend they are both to be had even in this life, without turning Mussulmans. We have as little politics here within a few miles of the Court (nay perhaps at the Court) as you at Southampton, and our ministers I dare say have less to do. Our weekly histories are only full of the feasts given to the queen and royal family by their servants, and the long and laborious walks her majesty takes every morning. Yet if the grave historians shall hereafter be silent of this year's events, the amorous and anecdotical may make posterity some amends by being furnished with the gallantries of the great at home; and 'tis some comfort that if the men of the next age do not read of us, the women may. From the time you have been absent, I've not been to wait on a certain great man through modesty, through illness, and through respect. But

for my comfort, I fancy that any great man will as soon forget one that does him no harm, as he can one that has done him any good.

"Believe me, my Lord, yours, &c."

From the Earl of Peterborough to A. Pope, Esq.

"I must confess that in going to Lord Cobham's, I was not led by curiosity. I went thither to see what I had seen, and what I was sure to like.

"I had the idea of those gardens so fixt in my imagination by many descriptions, that nothing surprised me; immensity and Vanburgh appear in the whole, and in every part. Your joining in your letter animal and vegetable beauty, makes me use this expression. I confess the stately Sacharissa at Stow, but am content with my little Amoret.*

"I thought you indeed more knowing upon the subject, and I wonder at your mistake: why will you imagine women insensible to praise, much less to yours? I have seen them more than once turn from their lover to their flatterer. I am sure the farmeress at Bevis †, in the highest mortifications in the middle of her Lent, would feel emotions of vanity, if she knew you gave her the character of a reasonable woman.

* A pet name for his favourite Bevis Mount.

† Lady Peterborough; her half brother, Mr. Lane, lived there in the capacity of his Roman Catholic chaplain.

"You have been guilty again of another mistake, which hindered me showing your letter to a friend: when you join two ladies in the same compliment, though you gave to both the beauty of Venus and the wit of Minerva, you would please neither. If you had put me into the Dunciad, I could not have been more disposed to criticise your letter. What, Sir — do you bring it in as a reproach or as a thing uncommon to a court, to be without politics? With politics indeed the Richlieus and such folk have brought about great things in former days: but what are they, Sir, who without policy in our times can make ten treaties in a year and secure everlasting peace?

"I can no longer disagree with you, though in jest. Oh how heartily I join with you in your contempt for excellency and grace, and in your esteem of that most noble title loiterer: if I were a man of many plums, and a good heathen, I would dedicate a temple to laziness: no man ever could blame my choice of such a deity, who considers that when I have been fool enough to take pains, I always met with some will more able to undo my labours.

"Yours, &c."

A. Pope to the Earl of Peterborough.

"You were in a very polemic humour when you did me the honour to answer my last. I always under-

stood, like a true controvertist, that to answer is only to cavil and quarrel: however, I forgive you: you did it (as all polemics do) to show your parts. Else was it not very vexatious to deny me to commend two women at a time? It is true, my Lord, you know women as well as men: but since you certainly love them better, why are you so uncharitable in your opinion of them? Surely one lady may allow another to have the thing she herself least values, reason, when beauty is uncontested. Venus herself would allow Minerva to be goddess of wit when Paris gave her the apple (as the fool herself thought) on a better account. I do say that lady P. is a reasonable woman, and I think she will not take it amiss, if I obstinately insist upon esteeming her, instead of toasting her like a silly thing I could name, who is the Venus of these days. I see you had forgot my letter, or would not let her know how much I thought of her in this reasonable way, but I have been kinder to you, and have shown your letter to one who would take it candidly.

"But for God's sake, what have you said about politicians? you made me a great compliment in the trust you reposed in my prudence, or what mischief might I not have done you with some that affect that determination? Your Lordship might have spoken of heroes. What a bluster would the God of the winds have made, had one that we know puffed against Eolus, or (like

Xerxes) whipped the seas? They had dialogued it in the language of the Rehearsal: —

'I'll give him flash for flash,
I'll give him dash for dash.'

But all now is safe. The poets are preparing songs of joy, and halcyon days are the word.

"I hope, my Lord, it will not be long before your dutiful affection brings you to town. I fear it will a little raise your envy to find all the Muses employed in celebrating a royal work, which your own partiality will think injurious to Bevis Mount. But if you have any inclination to be even with them, you need but put three or four wits into any hole in the garden, and they will out-rhyme all Eton and Westminster. I think Swift, Gay, and I could undertake it, if you don't think our heads too expensive: but the same hand that did the others, will do them as cheap. If all else should fail, you are sure at least of the head, hand, and heart of your servant.

"Why should you fear any disagreeable news to reach us at Mount Bevis? Do as I do even within ten miles of London,—let no news whatever come near you. As to public affairs, we never knew a deader season. 'Tis all silent, deep tranquillity. Indeed, they say 'tis sometimes so just before an earthquake. But whatever happens, cannot we observe the wise neutrality of the

Dutch, and let all about us fall by the ears? Or if you, my Lord, should be pushed on by any old-fashioned notions of honour and romance, and think it necessary for the general of marines to be in action, when our fleets are in motion, meet them at Spithead, and take me along with you. I decline no danger where the glory of Great Britain is concerned, and will contribute to empty the largest bowl of punch that shall be rigged out on such an occasion. Adieu, my Lord, and may as many years attend you as may be happy and honourable!"

Earl of Peterborough to Pope.

"You must receive my letters with a just impartiality, and give grains of allowance for a gloomy or rainy day: I sink grievously with the weather glass, and am quite spiritless when opprest with the thoughts of a birth-day or a return.

"Dutiful affection was bringing me to town, but undutiful laziness, and being much out of order, keep me in the country; however, if alive, I must make my appearance at the birth-day. Where you showed one letter you may show the other; she that never was wanting in any good office in her power, will make a proper excuse, when a sin of omission, I fear, is not reckoned as a venial sin.

"I consent you shall call me polemic, or associate

me to any sect or corporation, provided you do not join me to the charitable rogues *, or to the pacific politicians of the present age. I have read over Barkly † in vain, and find after a stroke given on the left I cannot offer the right cheek for another blow. All I can bring myself to is to bear mortification from the fair sex with patience.

"You seem to think it vexatious that I should allow you but one woman at a time, either to praise or love. If I dispute with you on this point, I doubt every jury will give a verdict against me; so 'tis with a Mahometan indulgence, I allow you pluralities, the favourite privilege of our church.

"I find you do not mend upon correction. Again I tell you, you must not think of women in a reasonable way: you know we always make goddesses of those we adore upon earth, and do not all the good men tell us, we must lay aside reason in what relates to the Deity.

"'Tis well the poets are preparing songs of joy; 'tis well to lay in antidotes of soft rhyme against the rough prose they may chance to meet with at Westminster. I should have been glad of anything of Swift's; pray when you write to him next, tell him I expect him

* The members of the Charitable Association, who had just been convicted of gross peculation.

† Barkly's Apology for the Quakers.

with impatience, in a place as odd and as much out of the way as he is himself.

"Yours, &c."

Earl of Peterborough to Pope.

"Whenever you apply, as a good papist, to your female mediatrix, you are sure of success, but there is not a full assurance of your entire submission to Mother Church, and that abates a little of your authority. However, if you will accept of country letters, she will correspond from the haycock, and I will write to you upon the side of my wheelbarrow: surely such letters might escape examination.

"Your idea of the golden age is that every shepherd might pipe when he pleased. As I have lived longer, I am more moderate in my wishes, and would be content with the liberty of not piping when I am not pleased.

"Oh how I wish to myself and my friends a freedom which fate seldom allows, and which we often refuse ourselves! Why is our shepherdess* in voluntary slavery? Why must our Dean submit to the colour of his coat, and live apart from us? And why are you confined to what you cannot relieve?

"I seldom venture to give accounts of my journeys

* Mrs. Howard.

beforehand, because I take resolutions of going to London, and keep them no better than quarrelling lovers do theirs. But the devil will drive me thither about the middle of next month, and I will call upon you to be sprinkled with holy water, before I enter the place of corruption.

"Yours, &c."

Earl of Peterborough to Pope.

"I am under the greatest impatience to see Dr. Swift at Bevis Mount, and must signify my mind to him by another hand, it not being permitted me to hold correspondence with the said Dean, for no letter of mine can come to his hand.

"And whereas it is apparent, in this Protestant land, most especially under the care of Divine Providence, that nothing can succeed or come to a happy issue but by bribery, therefore, let me know what he expects to comply with my desires, and it shall be remitted unto him.

" For though I would not corrupt any man for the whole world, yet a benevolence may be given without any offence to conscience; every one must confess that gratification and corruption are two distinct terms; nay, at worst, many good men hold, that for a good end some very naughty measures may be made use of.

" But, Sir, I must give you some good news in rela-

tion to myself, because I know you wish me well. I am cured of some diseases in my old age, which tormented me very much in my youth.

"I was possest with violent and uneasy passions, such as a peevish concern for truth, and a saucy love for my country.

"When a Christian priest preached against the spirit of the Gospel, when an English judge determined against Magna Charta, when the minister acted against common sense, I used to fret.

"Now, Sir, let what will happen, I keep myself in temper: as I have no flattering hopes so I banish all useless fears; but as to the things of this world, I find myself in a condition beyond expectation; it being evident from a late parliamentary inquiry * that I have as much ready money, as much in the funds, and as great a personal estate as Sir Robert Sutton. If the translator of Homer find fault with this unheroic disposition, or what I more fear, if the Draper of Ireland accuse the Englishman of want of spirit, I silence you both with one line out of your own Horace: —

'Quid te exempta juvat spinis e pluribus una?'

For I take the whole to be so corrupted, that a cure in any part would be of little avail.

"Yours, &c."

* Upon the Charitable Corporation affairs.

Dean Swift to the Earl of Peterborough.

" My Lord,

" I never knew or heard of anybody so volatile and so fixed as your Lordship. You, while your imagination is carrying you through every corner of the world, where you have or have not been, can at the same time remember to do offices of favour and kindness to the meanest of your friends; and in all your scenes you have passed have not been able to attain that one quality peculiar to a great man, of forgetting every thing but injuries. Of this I am a living witness against you, for being your most insignificant of all your old humble servants, you were so cruel as never to give me time to ask a favour, but prevented me in doing whatever you thought I desired, or could be for my credit or advantage.

" I have often admired at the capriciousness of Fortune, in regard to your Lordship. She has forced courts to act against their oldest and most constant maxims, — to make you a general, because you had courage and conduct: an ambassador, because you had wisdom and knowledge in the interests of Europe; and an admiral on account of your skill in maritime affairs; whereas, according to the usual method of court proceedings, I should have been at the head of the army, and you of the church, or rather a curate under the Dean of St. Patrick's.

"The Archbishop of Dublin laments that he did not see your Lordship till he was just on the point of leaving the bath. I pray God you may have found success in that journey, else I shall continue to think there is a fatality in all your Lordship's undertakings, which only terminate in your own honour and the good of the public, without the least advantage to your health or fortune.

"I remember Lord Oxford's Ministry used to tell me, that not knowing where to *write to you*, they were forced to *write at you*. It is so with me, for you are in one thing an Evangelical man, that you know not where to lay your head, and I think you have no house.

"Pray, my Lord, write to me, that I may have the pleasure in this scoundrel country, of going about and showing my depending parsons a letter from the Earl of Peterborough.

"Yours, &c."

The following letter was in answer to an inquiry after his health, which was then suffering severely. The tone is widely different from that of many of his former letters to the same person.

The Earl of Peterborough to Mrs. Howard.

"October, 1730.

"I return you a thousand thanks for what you were pleased to send me; the prevailing remedy will be your charitable wish. I dare not but recover, if you command me to do so; for in what dare I disobey?

"It is certain you or none must have the credit of my recovery. The doctors have told me mine is an inward pain; if so, I can have no cure from any other person.

"You blame me for seeking no remedies, and yet you know vain attempts of any kind are ridiculous. I have some time since made a bargain with Fate to submit with patience to all her freaks: some accidents have given me a great contempt, almost a distaste of life. Shakspeare shall tell you my opinion of it:—

'Life is as weary as a twice-told tale
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.'

'Life is a walking shadow — a poor player,
That frets and struts his hour upon the stage,
And then is seen no more.'

"Do not wonder then, Mrs. Howard, if the world is become so indifferent to me, that I can even amuse myself with the thoughts of going out of it."

CHAP. XXIII.

In 1732 he was very near going out of the world; a painful and dangerous complaint, to which he had been long subject, almost carried him off. For some days, indeed, he lay hopelessly at the point of death. But even then, in his seventy-fourth year, the indomitable spirit triumphed over the withered frame, and for a time conquered the disease. He recovered sufficiently to accompany Pope from Southampton to Winchester College on the occasion of the annual distribution of prizes. In compliment to him the subject for the Prize Poem given by Pope was "The Campaign of Valencia." Again, however, in 1735, he was attacked by the same complaint with increased malignity.

Peterborough now knew that his hour was come. He looked back upon seventy-seven years of as strange and varied a life as, perhaps, had

ever fallen to the lot of man: he looked forward to a few days, or weeks, or months of intense suffering, and then to a blank for evermore.

"But his heart was swoll'n and turned aside,
By deep interminable pride."

It was only under the influence of an unavoidable necessity that he at last consented to acknowledge as his wife her, the comfort of his declining years, and of whose gifts and virtues the proudest might be proud. As a last chance for his life, he was ordered to the milder climate of Lisbon; his wife's care and society were indispensable to him, and she was determined not to submit to the publicity of travelling with him in that dubious position in which the flower of her youth had withered away. He still hesitated, but she was firm.

The tardy act of justice was at length performed in a thoroughly characteristic manner. He appointed a day for all his nearest relations to meet him at the apartments over the gateway in St. James' Palace: these rooms belonged to

Mr. Pointz, who had married his niece, and who at that time was tutor to Prince William, afterwards Duke of Cumberland. Anastasia was also appointed to be there at the same time, but had not the least notion of the scene which her eccentric husband had prepared. When all were assembled, Peterborough addressed them with an animation worthy of his best days, and with deep feeling, worthier than he had ever known before. He described a lady who had been gifted by Heaven with every virtue and every endearing quality which woman could possess: of rare talents and accomplishments, of exemplary patience, of enduring affection, and of spotless purity. He described how he owed to her the best and happiest hours of his life; how her society had been his chiefest blessing in health, and how her tender care had been his dearest comfort in suffering and sorrow. He confessed how his heart through life had done her the justice that his weak vanity had refused; how he had loved her, and her alone, with true and abiding attachment. While he spoke the dying

man's voice at times rose with energy, at times trembled with the deepest pathos, and, as he concluded, he took Anastasia by the hand, and led her forth among the survivors of his haughty race as the woman whom he had attempted to describe,—who had been for long years "his best friend," the wife of his bosom. The strangeness and suddenness of the announcement instantly overcame her; she fainted in the midst of the company, and was carried away insensible.

After this scene Peterborough returned to Bevis Mount to make preparations for his departure, and while there wrote to Mrs. Howard, now Lady Suffolk, for the last time, in July 1735. The quiet submission of this final letter shows a touching contrast to the folly which had marked the beginning of his correspondence with that lady.

Lady Suffolk.

Bevis Mount, July, 1735.

"Madam,

"I return you a thousand thanks for your obliging inquiry after my health. I struggle on with doubtful success: one of my strongest motives to do

so is, the hopes of seeing you at my cottage before I die, when you either go to the bath or to Mrs. Herbert's.

"In my most uneasy moments, I find amusement in a book, which I therefore send you; [no doubt the Life of Julian the Apostate, by the Abbé de la Bleterie, published in 1735]; it is one of the most interesting I ever read. I had gathered to myself some notions of the character from pieces of history written in both extremes, but I never expected so agreeable and fair an account from a priest. In one quarter of an hour we love and hate the same person without inconstancy. One moment the emperor is in possession of our whole heart, and the philosopher fully possessed of our soul; within a quarter of an hour we blush for our hero and are ashamed of our philosopher.

"What courage, what presence of mind in danger! the first and bravest man in a Roman army; sharing with every soldier the fatigue and danger! The same animal hunting after fortune tellers, gazing upon the flight of birds, looking into the entrails of beasts with vain curiosity; seeking for cunning women (as we call them) and silly men to give him an account of his destiny, and if it can be believed, consenting to the highest inhumanities in pursuit of magical experiments.

"Yet when we come to the last scene, the most pre-

judiced heart must be softened; with what majesty does the emperor meet his fate! showing how a soldier, how a philosopher, how a friend of Lady Suffolk's (only with juster notions of the Deity), ought to die.

"The lady, the book, or both together, have brought me almost into a raving way. I want to make an appointment with you, Mr. Pope, and a few friends more, to meet upon the summit of my Bevis Hill, and thence, after a speech, and a tender farewell, I shall take my leap towards the clouds (as Julian expresses it) to mix among the stars; but I make my bargain for a very fine day, that you may see my last amusements to advantage.

"Wherever be the place, or whenever the time, this I can assure you with great sincerity, I shall remain to the utmost possibility, &c. &c.

"PETERBOROUGH."

On account of the death of the clergyman who had performed the private ceremony, Peterborough was again married to Anastasia at Bristol, subsequently to the scene at St. James' Palace. Shortly afterwards his sufferings became so intense that he was obliged to submit to a surgical operation of a most painful and dangerous character, and while the wound was

yet open, he set out in a carriage to Southampton, despite the remonstrances of his physicians. He bore the journey well, however, and even rallied a little on his arrival.

About this time Pope paid him a last visit, at Bevis Mount, just before his departure for Lisbon. There cannot be a more complete and affecting account of Peterborough's closing days than that which Pope has given in the following letter to his friend Miss Martha Blount:—

"Madam,

"I found my Lord Peterborough on his couch, where he gave me an account of the sufferings he had passed through, with a weak voice but spirited. He talked of nothing but the great amendment of his condition, and of finishing the buildings and gardens for his 'best friend' to enjoy after him; that he had one care more, when he went into France, which was, to give a true account to posterity of some parts of history in Queen Anne's reign, which Burnet had scandalously represented; and of some others to justify her against the imputation of intending to bring in the Pretender, which, to his knowledge, neither her ministers Oxford and Bolingbroke, nor she, had any design to do.

"He next told me that he had ended his domestic

affairs, through such difficulties from the law that gave him as much torment of mind, as his distemper had done of body, to do right to the person to whom he had obligations beyond expression. That he had found it necessary not only to declare his marriage to all his relations, but, since the parson who married them was dead, to re-marry her in the church at Bristol before witnesses.

"The warmth with which he spoke on these subjects, made me think him much recovered, as well as his talking of his present state as a heaven to what was past. I lay in the room next to him, where I found he was awake, and called for help most hours of the night, sometimes crying out for pain. In the morning he got up at nine, and was carried into the garden in a chair. He fainted away twice there. He fell about twelve into a violent pang, which made all his limbs shake, and his teeth chatter, and for some time he lay as cold as death. His wound was dressed, which was done constantly four times a day, and he grew gay and sat at dinner with ten people. After this he was in great torment for a quarter of an hour, and as soon as the pang was over was carried into the garden by the workmen, talking again of history, and he declaimed with great spirit against the meanness of the present great men and ministers, and the decay of public spirit and honour.

"It is impossible to conceive how much his heart is above his condition. He is dying every hour, and obstinate to do whatever he has a mind to. He has concocted no measures beforehand for his journey, but to get a yacht in which he will set sail; but no place fixed to reside at, nor has he determined what place to land at, nor has provided any accommodation for his going on land. He talks of getting towards Lyons, but undoubtedly he never can travel, but to the sea-shore.

"I pity the poor woman who has to share in all he suffers, and who can in no one thing persuade him to spare himself. I think he will be lost in this attempt, and attempt it he will. He has with him, day after day, not only all his relations, but every creature of the town of Southampton that pleases. He lies on his couch and receives them, though he says little. When his pains come, he desires them to walk out, but invites them to stay, and dine, or sup, &c. He says he will go at the month's end if he is alive.

"Nothing can be more affecting and melancholy to me than what I see here; yet he takes my visit so kindly, that I should have lost one great pleasure had I not come. I have nothing more to say, as I have nothing in my mind but this present object, which indeed is extraordinary. This man was never born to die like other men any more than to live like them."

When Pope was leaving Bevis Mount at the conclusion of this mournful visit, Peterborough gave him a watch, the gift of the King of Sicily, the Duke of Savoy of the War of the Succession; it bore the donor's arms and insignia on the inner case. "You will now have something to put you every day in mind of me," said the Earl, as he handed Pope this parting present.

A few days after this he sailed for Lisbon, and reached it; but on the 25th of October, with his "best friend" watching tenderly by his pillow, he died.

Lady Peterborough survived, beloved and honoured, to the age of eighty-eight years. Her life passed in profound retirement; she rarely left the "buildings and gardens" that her husband had been so anxious to complete and beautify for her at Bevis Mount, except to visit for a time the Duchess of Portland, the daughter of the Lady Oxford, who had been the witness of her private marriage, and her true friend through life.

Peterborough attained undoubted celebrity, but he stopped short of fame. He possessed some of the very highest qualities and faculties of man's nature in the very highest degree, but they were always counterbalanced by corresponding deficiencies that rendered them useless to his country and to himself. His quick apprehension and decision, the inexhaustible resources of his ingenuity, his preternatural energy, his undaunted courage, and, at times, his farsighted combinations, would have won him a place in the front rank among great military captains, but that his decision was often as capricious as it was rapid; his ingenuity wasted itself upon disproportioned objects; his energy, too frequently, was exhausted in useless or mischievous directions; his courage was shown as conspicuously in daring the authority of his superiors as in facing the enemy, and his combinations were at times marred by an ungovernable temper, which rendered his fellow-workers unwilling to develop them.

It cannot be denied that Peterborough's cam-

paigns of Catalonia and Valencia are among the most wonderful on record, and are altogether without parallel among the glorious but sober achievements of the British arms. Nevertheless, there was something strange and fantastic about them which renders their details more fitted for the airy framework of a romance than for the formal page of history. He alternated between gigantic plans of operation, including kingdoms and empires altogether beyond his grasp, and the personal execution of petty enterprises that were below the duties of his position. His mental vision was deficient in perspective and proportion. It magnified the foreground of the present into extravagant dimensions. It caused him to pursue the conquest of a province and that of a Valencian coquette with equal earnestness; and a dense fog of vanity obscured all perception of the judgment of others upon himself. Vanity was his evil spirit; it ruled him like a tyrant; it shaped and contracted every action; it coloured the brilliant sparkles of his wit; it hampered his eloquence; it entangled his plans; it corrupted

the sources of his generosity; it degraded his nobility; it dwarfed his ambition; it blinded his patriotism; it severed his friendships; and it poisoned the happiness of his love. And yet to his dying day he remained unconscious of this fatal weakness. He deemed, instead, that it was a lofty pride which swelled his heart when, with broken fortunes, with disappointed aspirations, he lay in bodily torture, and said, "From the height of my own greatness I look down upon kings and peers, and people, as men of like dimensions."

Peterborough lived and died an unhappy man. The fresh current of boyhood was polluted by the coarse licentiousness of Charles's court. The schemes of his early manhood, although successful, only bore to himself the fruit of the suspicion, and, as he held, ingratitude, of the Dutch King, whom he had helped to crown. His brilliant successes in Spain raised him up a host of enemies, who stung and irritated him incessantly. His diplomatic services had been accepted with obvious interestedness, baffled by suspicion, and repaid by neglect. A long life of military and political

activity, subsided but into an inglorious obscurity, the darkness of which was only now and then illumined by a flash of sarcastic wit, or by the glare of some absurd notoriety.

Few have ever started in life with such a combination of nature's and fortune's gifts, as this singular man. Nature had bestowed upon him a brilliant intellect, a lofty spirit, a warm heart, and a vigour of constitution that seemed to defy both hardships and excesses alike. Fortune had given him high rank and large estates. But the evil associations of his early life developed the weaker and worse characteristics of his nature into prominent growth, while the stronger and better were choked up and stunted. He owned to no fixed principles of religion, morality, or politics. His career was a series of unconnected actions. His motives were mere impulses. He sailed with all his canvas spread, but without a rudder; he admitted of no rule of duty, and his sole, but unacknowledged end, was the gratification of his inordinate self-esteem. His errors and shortcomings bore with them their own punish-

ment. The tone of many of his later letters is very sorrowful, even more sorrowful than bitter. His life was a mistake and a failure: its result was youth without enjoyment, manhood without happiness, old age without repose.

It would be an impertinence in the narrator, to elaborate the obvious moral from the story of such a career as that of Charles, Earl of Peterborough; but, in conclusion, he would fain call the reader's attention to the high and noble qualities, which ran through his hero's character, like silver threads through a dark tissue. While we condemn and pity, we may also find that which we can admire and respect. For he loved justice and liberty, and hated wrong and oppression; he risked his life and expended his fortune in his country's service; and, at a time of general corruption, he was never accused, even by his worst enemy, of one sordid thought.

APPENDIX.

Letters from Lord Peterborough to General Stanhope.

"Barcelona, Nov. the 18th, 1705.

"Friend,

"I send you my letter to my Lord Treasurer open, and Harley's; seal them before you deliver them; it will make mine the shorter to you, and you will be instructed from both, and from what my wife will inform you, of what I expect for the public and myself.

"You remember the uneasinesses I have been exposed to, before you left me; they are increased fifty per cent. since your departure: they do not torment me as they did in our first camp, because I hope our reputations are safe, but Cunningham must be a true prophet, and never were troops exposed to such a usage, or a poor prince to such Ministers.

"God preserve any country from the best of German Ministers! what is the circumstance of that place exposed to the worst of them? In the beggarly

circumstances of our princes and generals, it is certain nothing can be greater than the affection of all sorts of people to the King, and nothing can be greater than the contempt and aversion they have to Litestein and Wolfeld, and to the whole Vienna crew. They have spent their whole time in selling places; and all the money in the town so disposed of that way, and so well secured, that Mr. Crow, myself, and all the friends we could employ in Barcelona, could not obtain six thousand pounds to keep our troops from starving, either upon bills for Genoa, Leghorn, Lisbon, Amsterdam, or London.

"In a word, your wish could not put us in better circumstances, and your imagination cannot conceive a worse condition than we are in.

"Not only Catalonia, but all these parts of Spain are entirely disposed in our favour. Some provinces of France are as weary of their King, as these parts are of the Duke of Anjou.

"I have intelligence and correspondence wherever the enemy have troops, who are much more disposed to join us than to fight with us. From Valencia, from Arragon, from Mount Lewis, from Languedoc, from the Cevennes, I have every day offers and solicitations; and I cannot want success wherever I go, if I could but go. Add to all this that the Duke of Savoy is returned, and in heart. In answer to some

letters from him, I was forced to send Hamilton to Italy.

"But on the other side, never Prince was accompanied by such wretches for Ministers: they have neither money, sense, nor honour; and make such work here, that were it not for Crow, who knows the people, and does interpose sometimes, all things here would be in the utmost confusion.

"In a word, I cannot get carriages to transport the baggage of our troops to their garrisons; I cannot get ammunition carried to a fortified town where there is not one barrel of powder; I cannot get provisions put into a place which must expect a siege; I cannot so much as get the breach of Barcelona repaired. The Dutch troops have not one farthing but what I am forced to find for them. The marines were never provided; for the troops that came over to us are naked, starving, and deserting back. I have no money left, I have no credit, I have sent a-begging to Italy, but cannot hope for a fit return; we have no medicines for our sick, we have not wherewithal to constitute and form hospitals, and we shall perish without being able to get to those places which only desire to be in our hands. The troops of La Feuillade are coming towards us, those from the frontiers of Portugal in motion, the French are rushing horse and foot on the frontiers, and the happy opportunity in

our favour cannot last long, and we cannot make use of it while it does.

"Now, Sir, I must trouble you a little upon my own account. I take it for granted that my readiness to serve in all places, and upon all occasions, and perhaps under the greatest difficulties, will not do me a prejudice in relation to my sea pretences, though I am not ignorant that there are some who will make it an argument that the great services that may be expected for the next campaign ashore can afford but little opportunity for my serving at sea. To this my plain answer is, without the command of the fleet and troops I desire to be recalled home, and will not serve. I think I have made no ill use of the double trust reposed in me, and I am sure it will prove more necessary this year than the last. You have sufficient experience of our sea politics, but as I have stated the double scheme in my letter to my Lord Treasurer for the operations next year, I must add to you, that I believe the enterprises along the coasts and on the sea-ports are the most probable. To Madrid we might have gone this year, with money and a little more force. They would scarce have had the leisure or wherewithal to have destroyed the country before us; but now that remedy they will have in their power, and certainly they will put it in execution when pressed, which must put us on the other measures in

conjunction with the fleet, besides what the necessity of affairs may require in Italy, or a superiority of force ashore.

"But, Sir, you that saw the wise negotiations of some people with our seamen, you that know what some men are capable of, which will be confirmed from Methuen from all that are concerned in the Queen's business, pray represent to the Ministers that nothing but sufficient authority, or positive orders as to those services approved by our Court, can save fleet and army from being exposed to the caprices of the most wretched creatures of the earth. The Prince Litestein and General Wolfeld have thought it strange that troops should not march without baggage, that they should complain for want of money, that they should think it hard not to have fire or quarters allowed them in Barcelona; in a word, that they should expect here what troops have every where else; that they should desire the sick should be taken from the well, or that hospitals should be provided to save troops they stand so much in need of. The truth is, a thousand have perished in this town by their inhumanity and negligence. They have hitherto lain exposed in open cloisters to the air and wet, the sick upon the bare ground amongst the other men, without any relief. Never men suffered so much and with so much patience; it goes to my soul; and all things are at a

stand, while these beggars are selling places to their greatest enemies, a German Sinsestein, the Prince of Hesse's piratical Secretary officiating as such for the King, and being become a great Minister.

* * * * * *

"I enclose a letter to your father, which I desire you to send. I solicit hard everywhere. I am sensible we might do great things if sustained, but I hope the Ministers will value themselves as they ought upon the support they give, and so keep these poor beggars from riding us with German pride and insolence, and sacrificing us by their folly. They have not assisted us in the least circumstance — have suffered a thousand of our men to perish by ill usage, and if our troops were not possessed with the opinion and desire to bring about some things of great consequence, they would lose patience and mutiny.

* * * * * *

"Your affectionate servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"I believe the Queen will order Charlemont to sell; if so, I have agreed with him at 1500*l.*, but he would have been described as a hero. If he be prevented from bargaining for the new clothing, the Regiment will come cheap."

* * * * * *

"Valencia, June 17th, 1706.

"Sir,

"According to the laudable custom of our Court, they have sent me a scheme for the service, quite differing from the first and solemn resolutions of the Council of War, and send to me to know what men and money I can send to the Saragossa army; and this, no opinion of a Council of War, but a letter signed by the King, without anything to the same purpose from any General or Minister.

* * * *

"I desire you will make use of this opportunity with the King to let him see how proper it was to threaten me, as if I defrauded him of public money. I offered to pay all his troops, gave all the money I had when I left Catalonia, and yet was used according to their innate good breeding. I am afflicted at the disappointment for the public, having not a farthing to give to his troops; but the mortification had yet been greater if it had not been explained to them, what they would not be convinced of by me; however, I must turn heaven and earth to get money to support his troops, and will do it if they are made sensible how unreasonable their obliging ways were; and that they must starve, or rob, if I do not find ways to support them, at the hazard of my own fortune. I believe I shall soon be possessed of Requena, the

proper place for our magazine for Castille, and of Alicant, whither I am marching with some troops. Our new men are all in the hospital; but, however, Las Torres is gone, and the whole kingdom ours.

"Your affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Sir,

"It is more than intolerable that the same thing should be expected from me without the troops agreed, as with them, — without money, as with money; and, what is most provoking, I am not to think myself ill-used, receiving every day the most needless affronts, and the greatest hardships.

"But that you may depend upon, and you do me justice in believing that these follies can make no alteration in me in any part of my duty; only, as a public minister, I desire you to advise the Ministers I am very weary of the service, that they may not be surprised if I should make use of the blessed liberty you obtained for me.

* * * * * *

"In a word, want of money alone will destroy us; and I hardly see how I can get those troops in order to march, if the opportunity was fair to employ them.

Upon the whole matter, if the Portuguese are retired, I see but one bold stroke to save us, which is, to make use of this season, when troops can hardly march by land, to embark 6000 men, and attempt Cales [Cadiz], which at present must be unprovided; it may be covered with the pretence of Italy. We may be from Alicant and those parts before Cales ere they suspect our design, or can take their resolutions. The truth is, at present all the strength of Spain is in Gibraltar, Cales, and the places in Catalonia; all the wealth, in Andalusia and Madrid. Valencia and Arragon are great loose bodies, that follow immediately the superiority of force in the field; but, however, if once declared for us, they would amuse the enemy for some time, and it would require no little space to come and walk them over.

* * * * * *

"Sir,

"Your most humble and affectionate servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Valencia, the 20th (June), 1706."

"Sir,

"The news we received from Tortosa, of the Duke of Anjou having left Madrid, is confirmed of all

hands by the advices we have likewise received; though I have no notice from the King and yourself, I take it for granted, since the letters to me from Tortosa came from the magistrates, and they sent the copies of those came from Cifuentes.

"It cannot be doubted but that the King will make the utmost haste to his capital, and therefore march with the horse without any delay, since he may safely do it from this side, upon the retreat of the enemy towards Pamplona.

* * * * * *

"All the difficulty can be made by the King must be upon this presumption, that a powerful army may return upon Spain and into Arragon, when the troops retired towards Pamplona may be joined by Tessé and the French; and that there will be a necessity of a like considerable force to oppose, if the affairs of Italy are supported. In our present circumstances, I think there is nothing so plain, as that the French must desist from the thoughts of conquering a kingdom they could not keep when they had it. Besides, these troops cannot for some months form this terrible body, and when the King is master of Madrid and of the moneys which I suppose may be got there, of the foot taken in Alcantara, and of those that will desert the enemy, with the assistance of those great men that will make their court upon such a revolution, I sup-

pose it will be easy to get together a considerable body of what may be called old troops.

"Upon the whole matter I think I may depend upon this, that the King will lose no time in going to Madrid, and that, in the present circumstances, his quickest and safest way is by Valencia, and not by Arragon. I conceive, if the foot were to follow, it would be by slow and easy marches, and that the King will be retarded by nothing. I shall therefore get the horse forwards, and not press any of the services in this country to the fatiguing or ruin of our men, since all will fall of course, as soon as the retreat of the Duke of Anjou is known.

"Pray let me hear from you as soon as possible; and let me know the King's resolution, that I may apply myself wholly to get the horse in a condition to march.

* * * * * * *

"I hope the King will be pleased with the fortifications at Tortosa: he has reason to be satisfied with my care and concern; but to those that think everything their due, there is no merit.

"Sir,

"Your affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Valencia, (June) the 30th."

"Sir,

* * * *

"It is not conceivable what infamies have been committed by Bassett in this country, and such insolencies and follies were never heard of. I fear he has distributed some of his money, and I should be sorry the King should be persuaded not to discontinue such scandalous actions, especially after having, in a manner, engaged me in reputation, by his orders given to me, the Viceroy, and the Court, to take the proper measures to repress his insolencies.

* * * *

"Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Sir,

* * * *

"I should be easy by the orders I have received, and the circumstances I find my affairs in at home, if the Court had taken measures anything less desperate. I do not see why the enemy should not burn to the walls of Saragosa, while you are there, and besiege you in it, since they may invest it with 6000

horse; by what you will be told from Madrid, it would be difficult, I doubt, to make a Portuguese army march to Saragosa. And in time, with good management, you may wait till some foot may join them. By the account of our circumstances in the West Indies, the policy of losing the precious time will more plainly appear.

"I have all possible encouragement from home, and I conceive them perfectly well apprized of our conduct and management; some marks of the Queen's favours give me uneasiness, and others more trouble; but the character of ambassador extraordinary, with those plenipotentiary powers sent me, are calculated to reduce our German Ministers to some bounds. I doubt the news will not be over-acceptable to some of the Court. I am made uneasy by the great trust the Queen is pleased to repose in me, being more accountable for the events in Italy; and what resolutions can be taken before we come to Madrid. We might have been in condition to judge, and act, too, in ten days' time, if the King would not have broke into such solemn resolutions, with a folly and weakness which I believe was never equalled.

"My Lord Mordaunt is coming with the Queen's compliments to the King of Spain, upon the affairs of Flanders; and though I cannot but say the Duchess of Marlborough's part, my Lord Treasurer's in that,

and all that concerns me, is very obliging, yet I own I could have spared that favour.

* * * *

"I am resolved to make one effort more, to see if anything can touch a German heart. I have received a good sum of my own, and credit; the King and his troops shall have every farthing of it, and I will send it in gold to our expedition at Saragosa, as likewise a thousand pistoles for the Portugal ambassador; he writes to Mead, who can furnish him with none. I am desirous to oblige him, and you will do me the favour to make him sensible of it.

* * * *

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Valencia, July the 18th, 1706."

"Valencia, the 13th July, 1706.

"Sir,

"You told me once, you wondered at my temper upon the retreat of the Portuguese; though it may seem strange to retire when there is no enemy, I think it more extraordinary not to advance towards a crown.

"But, Sir, this administration makes one lose all patience, or gives it one to the last degree. I am really come to that pass that nothing can move me, as you will find by my answer to your last letter but one.

* * * *

"Mr. Mead will satisfy you that I have wasted no public money; I wish the makers of these lies could say they had wasted no precious time.

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"July the 20th, 1706.

"Sir,

* * * * *

"But our Admiral plundering Carthagena, that admitted them with all imaginable civility and gallantry, and making themselves the judges of what ought to be confiscated, and taken it for themselves, is a proceeding as new as scandalous.

* * * *

"I desire you to see if any civilities of mine can be made acceptable, by your putting them in a true light before His Majesty; the last letter I received from

him was very civil. I have laid out 10,000*l.* of my own for his service since I came to Valencia.

* * * *

"Sir,

"Yours,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Sir,

"The unwillingness of my brethren of the sea to stir one step out of the way for any service, is so remarkable, that a remedy shall be put to that lazy humour as soon as I can get the necessary authority.

* * * *

"Your most affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Almunafelt, the 24th July, 1706.

"Sir,

* * * *

"As to the Admirals, I think nothing was ever so extraordinary as their proceedings; I shall explain them more at large. At Carthagena, Jennings, from

the pretences of plundering, in a town that received them with all the kindness imaginable, and the main fleet has, in the environs of Alicant, taken to the value of fifty thousand crowns in wine from friend and foe, under the happy pretext of *Gavachos* and *Butiflenos!*

* * * *

"Sir,

"Yours,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Parilla, August the 1st, 1706.

"Sir,

"The consequences of the most fatal resolution taken by the King, in delaying his journey to Madrid, appear every day more and more; and I can hardly persuade myself that men in their common senses could fall into such measures. Nothing is like the usage I have received from the Court; and the only consolation I have is, that I believe it will prove sufficient to make me take the happy opportunity of leaving them to their own conduct and fortune.

"In my opinion, from being absolutely secure of the kingdom, their affairs were never in worse circumstances; and a most scandalous and unexpected re-

volution may happen. There are generals enough; and I may well be spared, who am much more willing to return to my cabin, when, hitherto, I can give the world a good account of myself, than to share with others a disgrace, that is as probable, in my opinion, as it will be little expected in England, if it should happen, who, I suppose, think all over, and will be sure to neglect every thing necessary for our support this autumn.

"Never men were so industrious to bring things all ways to the utmost extremities, for I see nothing but a battle, which, with a disadvantage of our side, is fatal,—no retreat, no security, no after-game, but every man lost; for, assure yourself, in Castille there is a most violent spirit against us, which appears to a degree that could not be imagined.

"As the possession of Madrid six weeks ago gave us all imaginable advantages, had, in a manner, engaged all Spain, and given us the opportunity of driving the horse the enemy had out of this country, before they were reinforced with foot, as it might have encouraged the Portuguese to march on (whose stop for ten days at Madrid was as fatal as Hannibal's at Capua), so now, in my poor opinion, the possession and defence of Madrid is like to prove our greatest trouble, and put us upon measures of all unreasonable hazards to protect it.

"That the King must go thither is certain, and as

certain that he will be received there with nothing but noise. Every body is persuaded the deciding stroke is at hand, and will, therefore, expect the events of a battle. They think we have no succours at hand, that the enemy are in daily hopes of reinforcements; they have no opinion of the Portuguese troops; and believe the other army will be very hearty and very unanimous. And, indeed, I am very much afraid of them, for their former actions, and this last wise stroke of detaining the King has given a contempt and aversion for the German Ministry that is inconceivable; and the change of disposition in every place in a month's time cannot be expressed.

"After the taking Requena, twenty horse might have gone to Madrid; and all the places were offering to me to acknowledge the King, upon condition I would protect them from Miquelets, and the thieves and rogues bred up under Bassett: but now, many thousands were in arms, to oppose our passing the river Xucar; and they broke down all the bridges, and flung up earth and stoccaded many passes, and have given all the most warm and foolish marks of ill-will, and had made it very uneasy for us to pass but for the drought, which had made many places fordable.

"The letters for Mahoni, from the governors of Cuenca and St. Clemente, express their inclinations

and hopes, which I doubt are better grounded than we believe; and in Valencia things cannot be in worse circumstances:—the country disgusted and affronted to the highest degree in the King's neglect of them, who had so zealously served him,—and revenge is a passion not unknown to the Spaniards. That poor people, so exposed and harassed, had got sixteen thousand pistoles ready to present to the King. Castillon de la Plana, Xativa, and some other great towns, had a thousand pistoles ready, and many others five hundred, to present to the King; but between the King and the Admirals, such an alteration was never in any country, and sure never were such measures taken by both to procure it. All the *huerto* of Alicant, as they call it, the people, all our friends; and when we were expecting them to join and assist us, then to land all our men, and employ our boats night and day to rob them with that admirable distinction of knowing who were *Gavachos* and *Butiflenos!* This is yet beyond St. Mary's; and above fifty thousand crowns' worth of wine they have either embarked or destroyed.

"Besides, there is nothing that I apprehend more than a little army with many generals. What may be the pretences of a Portuguese, who, perhaps, has a mind to go home, what may be the disposition of the Court, I know not, but I am sure I will be commanded

by nobody, and have as little mind to command. I have always had in imagination, that our Ministry could make the King miscarry in the gates of Madrid; and I believe it may so happen.

"I will trouble you no more at present, but desire you to keep the contents of this letter to yourself. I shall be on the 4th at Pastrana, as the King's letter directs. I have eight hundred horse, and Aumada and Colbatch. Wyndham will be at or about Cuenca on the 5th, with five hundred horse and three regiments of foot. I am sorry to hear of an engagement. I suppose some of your blessed orders have drawn it on, when two thousand horse, and about three thousand foot, were at hand. I can only tell you, that all the comfort I have when I draw near your Court, is yourself. I wonder in none of your letters that you take notice of having received the money. I suppose you only writ to get some, and never think more of it when received.

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"PETERBOROUGH."

"Sir,

"When I came near Huete, I received the comfortable news, that all my baggage, consisting of sixteen waggons, besides fifty mules, except eight or nine with me, were taken by the enemy; all my

horses and equipage, and the most part of my servants killed, which I owe to the Spanish general; with the loss of the artillery that was there, which he left behind, without my knowledge or order, without a guard, when twenty men would have brought it safe to the camp. It is hard that I must suffer so by the follies of others, who never had any the least mischance while affairs were in my hands.

"The whole country rose with the enemy's horse for this noble project, and nothing could be more fortunate than my escape and coming; for though my particular loss is irrecoverable, yet, with about sixty horse, I have recovered and frighted the whole country, and brought them into subjection. I marched towards Cuenca to hasten Wyndham, and to give him what advice and assistance I could, and have contributed to keep him from starving, with much ado; but it is never thought of with you, that people may starve in a country where the people are against you, having no magazines and stores.

"The taking of Cuenca is the most fortunate thing in the world, and the recovery of Huete. Both strong by nature, the first might easily be made impregnable; the other consequences are touched in the Council of War, which you will see. I am but a poor volunteer, that stay a day or two to put things in some order, without which these troops, after their success, would

have perished before they could join you. Without these places, and the troops where they are, I do not see how you could subsist; and as things are, it will be hard enough, unless extraordinary careful measures be taken.

* * * *

"I bear all other losses patiently, besides my barbs and my cheese. My Lord Galloway and you have your share. I had eight waggons with good eatables and drink, which I told you I would send you; but good management can lose meat and drink, barbs and kingdoms.

* * * *

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Hacte, August the 16th, 1706."

"Huete, August 18th, 1706.

"Sir,

* * * *

"I hope by my diligence and care, to overcome even the ingratitude of your Court; at least, I will do my duty, upon other principles, and cannot be robbed of my reward. How much soever I suffer by the

follies, and ignorance, and misfortunes of others, I shall have the satisfaction of having done my duty.

"I do not see, but in the present circumstances if improved, but you may very well carry on a defensive war. Money I will get, if above ground, and a port to winter our fleet in; and of this rest assured, and with the utmost dispatch.

* * * *

"I suppose you will abate something of your insolence and cruelty at present. Let not the King make his enemies desperate, and discourage his friends. They are proper methods at this time. Let me hear from you and have answers. I am sorry for your sake. I have lost all my good wine and drink. I shall make a brave hand of it. I have nothing left but a suit of clothes and six shirts, and have lost above six thousand pounds by others, that never lost a mule, or the least thing, this whole war.

"Sir,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"I am just marching to Valencia."

"Sir,

"I send you, enclosed, my letter to the King: I will make my utmost efforts to overcome all the

prejudices raised by his villainies. I will serve him with all that zeal and delicacy which such usage deserves, as I receive from the Queen, who rewards me for all the ill-manners of this Court, and their ingratitude, with favours and obligations that can never be deserved since they are made more obliging in the manner than the thing.

"But if that won't do, I will seek other ways of being easy in this service; and I doubt not to bring it to that certainty, that none shall be able to prevent regular and proper measures to be taken, and that it shall be made impossible for them either to undo themselves, or disappoint the Queen and nation of the honours due to them for those generous efforts which have been so frustrated by the scandalous folly and knavery of some people.

* * * *

"Perhaps you might get me St. Roman, my aide-de-camp, who is taken, and my papers from the Duc of Berwick, which are of no further use to him when read.

* * * *

"I might have profited by the loss of my baggage, the towns concerned having offered to raise a great sum, rather than expect the effects of my resentment, which they had reason to expect but I chose to oblige

them to bring corn for the army, rather than money for me; but this, as all other services, will meet the same acceptance.

"Sir,

"Your affectionate friend,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"August the 30th, 1706."

"Sir,

"I received your letter with great satisfaction; for though I confess the pleasures I have had in Italy are great, and that the prospect of my speedy return makes it impossible for me to be in ill-humour, yet I was a little vexed that, by the indiscretions of that wretch, so many of my friends should believe you were consenting to such insinuations and stories that were spread to my prejudice. What I have 'scaped in Spain, what I have enjoyed in Italy, makes me conclude my stars are lucky, and have cured me of ill-humour. I have a little good wine sent me by Monsieur Pontchartrain, which will last for ten or twelve days, and I have fifty hogsheads of it at Genoa, that I hope will serve me for the campaign in Italy.

* * * * *

"I hope you are getting the fruit of my services to the little Marqueza; but I quit very willingly all my pretences in Spain to you and everybody else.

"Sir,

"Your most humble and obedient servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Buriana, (Jan. 6th, 1707)."

"Sir,

"I write to you from the country of wonders and uncertainty, from a place famous for the presence of three kings,—that of Sweden, Augustus, and Stanislaus.

"The allies may reproach themselves an overgrown power, which they might easily have prevented, which nothing can govern, and which would spoil even our greatest successes, since at last he will impose what peace he pleases.

"The King of Sweden, with fifteen millions of crowns raised in Saxe, has raised, clothed, and mounted eighteen thousand horse and eight thousand dragoons; his foot makes up fifty thousand, the best troops in the world. In a week he marches into Silesia. His

pretended quarrels with the Emperor are extraordinary, and fresh ones arise every day, but the pretence is, he will march against the Muscovites when he has reparation from the Emperor, who offers all desired; yet his Ministers cannot be admitted to audience.

"I am enjoying the pleasure of liberty and idleness, going from court to court in Germany, seeing wonders. Indeed, I can hardly do otherwise, being incommoded, and not able to travel; however, I shall reach Parliament and Old England in the autumn.

"I expect no news from Spain, expecting no good. You find Spanish horse will beat English foot, and that it was not so easy as you thought the getting to Madrid. I thank all those that have assisted in sending me to London.

"Pray present my service to the Marquise of La Casta, and tell her I hope she finds herself better in her new friendships, than the King has done in his new generals.

"Sir,

"Your most humble and obedient servant,

"PETERBOROUGH.

"Ranstad near Leipsic, July the 18th, 1707.

"The King of Sweden gives more fears by his silence

than ever any other monarch gave by his threats. It is undecided whether he is very wise or fool-hardy; all we know is, he has fifty thousand men mad enough to obey with pleasure all he can command."

THE END.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODES and SHAW,
New-street-Square.


00141074

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 27 February, 2016